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HOME CIRCLE FRATERNITY

THE EVOLUTION OF A NEW RELIGION

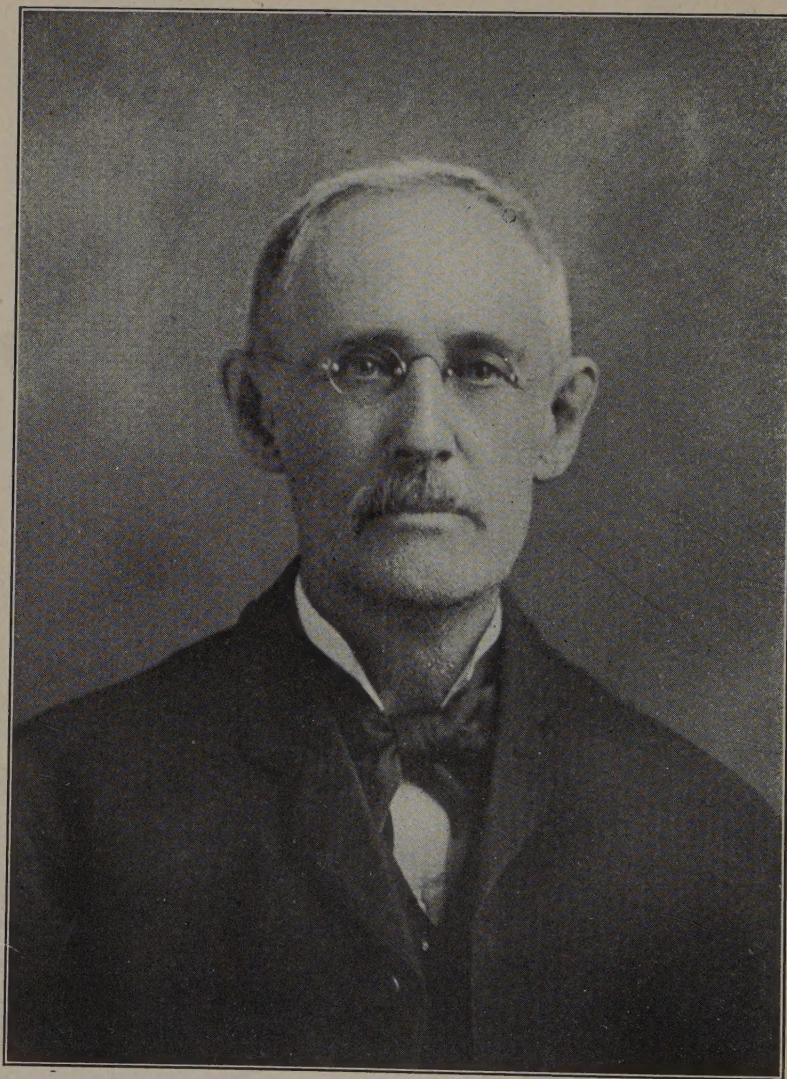
J. R. FRANCIS



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THE

Home Circle Fraternity

Evolution of a New Religion



Reynolds
BY
JOHN R. FRANCIS

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LOUISA CAROLINE FRANCIS
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PREFACE.

The Life Work of John R. Francis was largely along the lines of education and philanthropy. His intimate association with Spiritualists showed him that many of them were earnest, thoughtful, truth-seeking men and women living in isolated localities, far from libraries and reading rooms, and without means to purchase the books they needed. Soon after founding his paper he formulated a plan whereby these workers could obtain at a nominal cost a library that should cover the various phases of Spiritual Philosophy. This plan was faithfully carried out. With *The Progressive Thinker* he sent out each year a new volume of the series. Seventeen of these already have appeared. The present number consists of papers from his own pen. Such of these as have appeared in *The Progressive Thinker* he thought worthy of presentation in a more permanent form. The book was well under way at the time of his transition. To compile and arrange in so far as possible as he would have done has been a labor of love as well as a duty which I feel that I owe to those who have for so many years read with interest the product of his fertile brain.

LOUISA C. FRANCIS.

Chicago, Illinois.

THE ROUGH ROAD OF AN OLD SOLDIER.

Not long ago I was approached by a queer specimen of humanity, who, as quick as he caught my eye, said:

"Mister, I'm side-tracked! I have lost my hold! I am no longer strong, vigorous and active. The cold winds pierce my thin clothing; hunger at times gnaws at my vitals; the cold airs of night sting me as I seek some secluded place to sleep, and **side-tracked** I truly am, and cannot turn in any conceivable direction that I can observe a rift in the clouds! But the time was—long, long years ago!—when I was full of the spirit of life, and nothing then could **side-track** me. Then, **sitting** by the side of the girl I loved, I was the peer of Napoleon when he made his first love to Josephine; as happy as Washington when he breathed his ardent admiration into the ears of Martha; as highly pleased as the Roman Conqueror when he pressed his lips to the cheeks of Cleopatra. Yes, on a rustic seat in the forest, climbing vines overhead and moss-covered ground at our feet, with the blue vault of heaven over us, by the side of my Adaline—alas! I was not **side-tracked** then, but was the happiest of mortals. Stranger, can you help a poor, forlorn, **side-tracked** man?"

"Certainly I can and will."

"Be seated by my side," as he pointed to a rude seat, "and I will tell you why I am side-tracked; why I have lost my hold, and why the clouds seem so dark around me."

Complying with his request, he continued:

"Stranger, were you ever in a cottage home, clambering vines around the windows, a purling spring in the yard, and nature's flowers everywhere, and love glistening from as rosy cheeks and lips as were ever kissed by

mortal man, and every sound musically sweet and tender?"—

"Well,"—

"Don't interrupt me, stranger! Sit in silence as I tell you why I am side-tracked. In my house, stranger, was paradise! I did not aspire for a higher heaven, a grander home, or purer love! I don't know, stranger, but it seems to me that my woodland cottage was plastered all over with approving smiles of angels, and the central figure of them was my Adaline. But the war came, and at the first bugle call I responded, and enlisted to serve my country. No **side-track** then for me! I remember well the last night I stayed with Adaline! In the front of our vine-clad cottage we sat, my arms around her, bathed all over in that holy love which she alone possessed,—sweeter to me, stranger, than any incense on holy altar, or any perfume of bower or garden. The stars overhead! The silvery moon bursting from the clouds in the east to smile upon us! The cricket on the hearth chirping tenderly, as if in adieu to me forever. No side-track then, stranger! I had more happiness then to the square inch than you could compute with mathematics, and as I looked into Adaline's eyes and pressed my lips to hers, a doleful raven lighted on a log near us, and uttered a death-knell. Stranger, it was a death warning! I heard it just before my angel child died! It had the same doleful sound then as now. My limbs trembled, my heart fluttered, everything grew dark before me, and I fell right out of existence! Finally I came to, Adaline bending over me, wooing me back to life. In a few minutes I was myself again, and she laughed at my fears, just as if a raven could tell the future. In the morning we parted, her tear-stained eyes expressive of the regrets of her soul; I to go to the battle-field—she to the home of her father. Stranger, that raven **side-tracked** me. I was not in the army six months before a letter came announcing the death of Adaline. Here is the last letter I ever received from her—the writing now is almost illegible. Stranger, shall I read it to you?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Here it is, stranger.

"My Dear Jake: A week ago I wrote you all the current news, so you know what is happening in your old home as well as I do. Since then, papa has been very sick, and I have been tenderly nursing him. I tell you, my dearest husband, the days seem long and wearisome without you by my side. Yesterday, just as the west was tinged with all the colors that the sun could impart, the fleecy clouds resembling a great bed of flowers, I was by the side of Minnie's grave, the third anniversary of her death, with a large basket of woodland flowers to baptize her last resting-place with them and my tears. Jake, it did seem then that I could see her. I lost myself for a time in reverie. I seemed to be with her. I was really with her. She placed her tiny arms around my neck, Jake, and kissed me a hundred times, telling me that half of them was for her darling papa in the army. She told me, Jake, that I would soon be with her in heaven, and that we would be there to welcome you when you come. When I came from my reveries, I was lying on the green grass, the grave of Minnie for a pillow, and the stars of heaven shining upon me. I must have been there, Jake, for an hour, and it was all a dream! and, of course, will never come true. But, Jake, it will do no harm to tell you all I saw there. I was in heaven! It was a grand place. I saw there an exact counterpart of our woodland cottage; the same clambering vines; the same wild flowers; the same sparkling spring, only far more beautiful. Jake, an angel came and took Minnie and me to you. We found you on a battle field, calmly sleeping after the severe struggle of the day. Little Minnie placed her cheeks to yours and for a brief season cuddled by your side. I pressed my lips to yours and kissed you as in days when in our flower-arbored home. The angel said that I would never live to welcome you home, but that you would survive the struggle and live to be a very old man. But this was all a dream, Jake; I shall live to welcome you home again, with a thousand kisses and caresses. But seeing you so plainly, and seeing my darling Minnie, too, was gratifying, though in a dream. But, Jake, while at the grave of Minnie that same raven—it seemed to be the very one that appeared

before us on the evening of your departure—came and lighted at my feet and looked imploringly up into my face, and uttered a mournful sound. But all these dreams and omens mean nothing. I tell them to you, for I must always write good long letters to the dearest man on earth. I do wish you were with me; I would like to put my arms around your neck and press my cheeks to yours, and pillow my head upon your bosom, that our souls might thrill with that love which is yoŭrs and mine. But good-by, Jake, with a thousand kisses and a thousand good wishes. ADALINE.’ ”

Wiping the tears from his eyes with a handkerchief that had seen better and cleaner days, he remarked with deep emotion:

“Stranger, that was the last letter I received from Adaline. Only a few days after one was due from her, her father wrote me that she had been taken sick very suddenly, and in a few hours died, her last words being, ‘I see my beloved Jake.’ Stranger, since then I have been **side-tracked**. I can’t get on the main line, or the direct road. I have tried, and tried, and tried. I am now crippled, waiting, stranger, for the final summons, when I will be no longer **side-tracked**, but on the main line with my angel wife and Minnie by my side. Stranger, even now, I am full of hope. I believe that in heaven Adaline will be my wife, and Minnie my same darling child.”

Listening attentively to his pathetic story, I slipped a dollar in his hand to assist one who is **side-tracked**, and who will undoubtedly remain there until death breaks the condition.

How many there are who are side-tracked, who cannot, with all their strivings, get on the main line to happiness. To those poor unfortunates, always extend a helping hand and a cheering word. The loss of a wife and child had **side-tracked** him, and he could never catch hold of life again as it was with him when Adaline and Minnie were by his side. This world will never be ushered into the millennial era until every house and every home shall become an asylum for those who are side-tracked; then, and not till then, will angels draw near this earth and smile lovingly on all humanity.

The religion of the Home Circle Fraternity consists wholly of **BEING GOOD** and **DOING GOOD**, independent of all belief in a God, Devil, Savior or religious Dogmas—a religion that has a practical spiritual and ethical foundation, on which all classes can stand in perfect harmony and work for the advancement of mankind—a religion that places its genuine workers in accord with the **VIBRATIONS** that emanate from the philosophers, seers, poets, scientists, and other noble souls high in spirit life.

A VERY BEAUTIFUL DEATH.

THE VIOLINIST.

“When by the touch of music freed
I love the world that shuts me in,
When in the strife by men decreed
The noble hopes no guerdon win,
At whiles the music murmurs low,
At whiles with happy heart it sings,
Joy dances with the dancing bow,
Or sorrow sobs along the strings.

“While a lost alien on strange shores
I lie, by waves of music hurled,
Complaining through my fingers’ pours
The sorrow of a yearning world,
Till, lapsing from the heavens to earth,
I drop the throbbing violin
And common folk of little worth
With common faces close me in.”

Some deaths are a tragedy; some are a farce; some are sad; some are heroic; some are sublime; some are poetic, and occasionally one that is divinely musical and angelic, each death blooming with that flower which the

soil of their respective lives had cultivated. If reared in a soil of crime, evil surroundings, and discord, the death will constitute a tragedy in reality, and the entrance into the land of souls will be dark and forbidding.

In order that death may be sublime and beautiful, one's life must correspond therewith. There never was a rainbow that arched the heavens, as if a smile from the Infinite, without the mist of the morning or the descending drops of rain that come like Ministering Angels to the flowers and vegetation of earth.

How can your death be beautiful, unless, like the rainbow, **it is reflected through something**—through the poetic grandeur of good deeds and holy aspirations.

The villain's death reflects only darkness, wherein he is confronted with the deeds of his horrible life, which rise up as so many scorpions to sting him. By cultivating thorns only, you can not realize the beauty of the rainbow-tinted flowers. You can not die sublimely, beautifully, if you have not cultivated in your soul the deeds of life that correspond therewith in all respects.

The good thought is in tune with **THE INFINITE**; it is always in touch with the sphere of Angels of Light; it basks in those vibrations that reflect goodness into the soul, and tends to render death beautiful. It assists in building your sphere and home in the spirit realms. The good deed, the exalted thought, the pure aspiration, and the divine purpose to lift upward some soul struggling for light and aid, cluster around one's death, like flowers woven into a bouquet, and render one's death poetically inspiring.

Your deeds of life as surely indicate the true character of your death as the thermometer does that of a rising or falling temperature. If you live in the darkness of evil on earth, how can you expect anything but darkness on the spirit side of life? How can you expect to enter the high vibrations of the angels when you have only cultivated **the low vibrations of selfishness**? Death in order to be beautiful must correspond with those vibrations which produce the beautiful.

When a dear friend died in the long ago out in the far West, we sat by his bedside watching his transition into the realms of souls. His face was serenely sweet,

even in its paleness, and at one time became sublimely lovely, as if the smile of an angel nestled thereon to give him a foretaste of heaven. In those dying moments the angels clustered around him. There was even music in the air, a sweet death knell hymn to welcome him to his spirit home, and he was dead—his body—but his soul was more alive than ever. His transition was, indeed, beautiful.

But when poor Sobrisky, a violinist, died in Chicago, there was a scene that baffles all description by a poet or seer. For a long time he had supported himself comfortably by giving lessons on the violin. But old age finally came, as it comes to all with its numerous infirmities, and he failed by degrees to attract pupils. All the sweet keepsakes, tokens of affection, pearls of love of a wedded life, were disposed of at the pawnshop with a despairing wail of deep anguish. As he gave to the pawnbroker the last token of love that attached him to his angel wife, he sobbed like a child; his whole frame trembled, and a sigh so sad, so disconsolate, came from him, it was enough to make an angel weep. The last link that united him to his soul-mate in the Spheres of Light and Love, had been disposed of—and all was desolation!—nothing left but his violin, from which no one could part him but death. But the way of life became darker to him, while his soul became more radiant, more divinely lovely, until at last, food all gone, tokens of wifely affection all parted with, he realized that his end was near.

Half starved, weak in body, weary in spirit, yet calmly resigned to the awful condition he was in, he arose from his couch, grasped his violin, and commenced playing—feebly at first, but gradually his strength returned, and his soul seemed to vibrate in harmony with Beethoven and Mozart, who were, no doubt, bending over him with their divine radiance illuminating his soul. His old-time vigor had returned, and for a time his music was simply angelic, and under its divinely sweet influence, and the presence of the master musicians, the poor old man's life ebbed away, while several attracted by the heavenly music, saw the violin drop from his hands, and the poor old Violinist fell back on his pillow—a **BEAUTIFUL DEATH** indeed!

All should seek to have a beautiful death, but you can not have one unless you earn it; unless your crop of good thoughts, good deeds, and noble aspirations make it so. Commence now to prepare for a beautiful death, and to place yourself in accord and sympathy with the vibrations from the Sphere of Love and Harmony, and thus aid in developing a New Religion.

TWO SOULS ENTERING SPIRIT LIFE.

This world is full of impressive contrasts, and wonderful extremes. Incandescent heat and arctic cold represent two important extremes in the diverse vibrations of material nature. Birth into this world of beauty, and Death opening the Door into the spirit realms for a liberated soul, furnish a contrast that is enchanting to contemplate. The snake with its slimy tongue and poisonous saliva, and the angel radiant with love and intelligence, are the two extremes of creative energy on the part of Natural Law. One extreme is hideous, the other god-like.

All through the immensity of space there are vibrations that produce opposite results—extremes! Human beings represent the two extremes of darkness and light—the good and bad, the ignorant and the cultivated. The woman in this city who enticed beautiful young girls into dens of vice, desolation and ruin, is in contrast with the Angel of Light who labored unceasingly to redeem them, and bring them back to the benign influence of home.

God and the Devil stand prominently in contrast, whether facts or fiction. The contrasts of Heaven and Hell, have proved as interesting themes all along the ages. The golden streets of the former and the incandescent fires of the latter have proved good material for

the revivalist all through the times of the past. The laughter of joy and the sighs and moans of deep anguish and sorrow exist side by side. Sadness and cheerfulness play an important part in this world of ours. The ups and downs of life are here on this plane to stay for many years.

On earth and in heaven there are inequalities. No two lives run in exactly the same groove. The extremes of poverty and riches have existed since the world began. The brightness of the higher spheres of spirit life stand in contrast with the dark conditions of the lower halls in the regions celestial. If no contrasts in life, the work of the reformer would be gone. If no hideous spheres in the realms of souls, there would be no need of ministering spirits.

Ignorance and extreme wisdom can be discerned on all sides. The good and the bad intermingle. Ties that are binding bring the good and bad together. There was Nellie Goodwin, a conspicuous example. Her eyes were radiant with the light of an angel, and her features luminous with happiness and joy. Her smiles had the freshness of the morning glow, when all nature, glistening with radiant dewdrops, is awakening to new life. She seemed to exhale gladness just as naturally as the flower does its heaven-born perfume. Life was to her a romantic dream, she always standing on the bright side of it. Her rippling laughter found an echo in every heart; there was joy therein, like a healing balm. Finally, as the story goes, Nellie married—a joining of the Devil and the Angel in the “holy” bonds of matrimony. Charles, her husband, was exteriorly to those not acquainted with him, an Angel of Light. Interiorly, he was a Demon of Darkness, a wolf in sheep’s clothing, a viper in human form—cruel and remorseless in the extreme, and the embodiment of selfishness.

Here were marked contrasts joined together, one exhaling the fragrance of Heaven, the other possessing the craftiness of a Hell. One overflowing with the benign influence of sublime thoughts and angelic aspirations, and the other vibrating with the deception that lurks in the minds of demons. Two greater contrasts never existed. Extremes had met, one laden with high and noble aspirations, the other exactly the reverse.

These two extremes could not dwell together in unison, hence the ties were broken, the husband shot his wife and then turning the revolver on himself, committed suicide—and thus the ties that bound the two extremes in life were broken, and thus ends the chronicling of their career in the daily paper.

But there arises another scene, grandly beautiful, radiant with angelic loveliness on the part of the murdered woman, and the vibration of her unsullied nature seemed to scintillate in the spiritual atmosphere, and voices full of sweet, tremulous sympathy spoke words of kindly greeting to the liberated soul just forced out of its earthly body by the murderous hands of a villain. The spirit mother was there, clasping her in that maternal love which radiated an influence far surpassing in beauty anything which the loftiest imagination can perceive, affording a scene that would baffle the power of the angelic artist to adequately portray on canvas. An extreme was there, but it was one supreme thrill of gladness that the daughter and mother could meet in spirit life, and that their vibrations were in harmony with that divine principle that underlies the spirit realms, and manifests itself in many souls. One extreme of life, bright, noble, charming in all things, had been at last liberated by one whose whole nature was surcharged with those emotions that only find birth in the dark spheres of spirit life.

But there is another scene, that of a desolate, dismal, despairing soul, in the bleak, black, desolate hells of spirit life, where the moaning winds send forth a vibration sad, so witch-like and weird. The suicide and murderer was there, his spirit revealed as a monstrosity, and he reaping just what he had sown, his own acts of life sitting in judgment, and consigning him to his fate.

Thus it is that extremes often meet, are united in marriage, live in discordant vibrations and are at last separated by the hand of malignant violence—one going to climes infernal, regions of darkness and despair, where the howling winds are sepulchral, the atmosphere stifling, and from which there is no possible way of escape only through genuine repentance; the other ascending to the sphere of light and love, where angelic beings only live, and where radiant happiness exists among all the souls there.

Choose now your own **LIFE LINES**, the lines that lead to grander, nobler realizations, or the lines that lead to the home of demons, the region of souls steeped in crime sometimes so badly that total extinction may possibly follow—a soul lost, vanished, extinguished, blotted out of existence!

Always live a life that is in **PERFECT CONTRAST** with evil thoughts, words or deeds, and Angels of Light and Love will welcome you to your Spirit Home, and thus the **RELIGION OF GOODNESS** will be fully developed in your soul.

YOUR SPIRITUAL ASSETS CONSIDERED.

All humanity are moving along diverging lines. No two occupy the same plane of thought. The flower-tinted rainbow never makes the same impression on each one who is looking upwards admiring its transcendent beauty and loveliness.

Nature never exactly repeats itself in all of God's vast universe. The incoming and outflowing tides never send forth the same vibrations.

The smile that illuminates the radiant features of the charming maiden like a sunbeam from the Throne of Light, never will in all time appear again in all respects.

The events of the now will not return to-morrow. Even the sunshine of a summer day in the same exact proportion will never visit the world again. The earth itself with its myriads of animate life, will never again occupy the same position with reference to the various celestial orbs that it did one second ago. The twinkle of the North Star that you just observed never will be exactly repeated. The settings of the heavens with worlds and systems of worlds at this moment will not be the same when you draw your next breath. The moon never travels the same pathway twice. Each pulsation of the heart is different. What the eye sur-

veys this very moment, it can never see again, even one minute after, for during that time there has been growth or decay.

Not a single minute repeats itself in the vast arcana of nature. The ideals of religion vary with each human mind. No two persons view the same aspect of God, and no thought ever exactly repeated itself.

No vibration from the strings of a violin is ever, in minute details, repeated. Blood corpuscles are continually dying, and new ones are being evolved unlike those which have perished. The moan of anguish that dies away in sepulchral tones will never be heard again. No two die exactly the same.

The tune the little bird warbles to-day will never be heard again in all its charming details.

The universe to-morrow will have far different combinations than it has to-day, so you can safely say at this moment "Good-by to present conditions; they will never exist the same again in all their details."

Every beam of light that comes flitting from the sun is somewhat different from every other beam of light that ever existed.

The pitiful groan of the soldier dying on the battle field, stands with its vibrations of deep sorrow, solitary and alone—nothing like it in all respects in all the regions of space—it has its own sorrowful expression of anguish, as the spirit takes its flight to the bloodless spiritual plane of life. It was his expiring groan, wholly different from that of any other soldier's, as life vanished; it had an individuality of its own throughout, and can never be exactly counterfeited.

Your thoughts are wholly unlike the thoughts of any other person—they possess a distinct nature and potentiality of their own, and you are in all respects responsible therefor; they are your ethical, spiritualizing or degrading **ASSETS** in the making up of your individual responsibility in this life, and the spirit world to which you will eventually ascend. Being like no other thoughts in all the regions of sidereal space, they can easily be traced to **YOU**; you are the responsible owner, and their effects on your spiritual nature can be easily discerned. You can not escape from yourself. The ef-

fects of your thoughts, of your aspirations, of your acts, are your **ASSETS** only, and you will carry them to the regions of souls.

All things differ in their material and spiritual aspects, in their effects, in their general make-up, hence **YOUR** acts, **YOUR** thoughts, **YOUR** aspirations, possess an individuality of their own, and can be traced every time to **YOU**—they are your exclusive property, **ASSETS**, as it were, which you will take to the realms of souls, and those **ASSETS** will sit in judgment for you or against you.

Over a half century ago I knew a man in the then half-settled West. He was wealthy, exceedingly selfish, overbearing, a politician of the old school, and requiring servility in all his demands, in many respects a tyrant, cruel, remorseless. His thoughts, his schemes, his aspirations to promote self, possessed an individuality of their own, and were his spiritual **ASSETS**, and they alone will determine what his position shall be in the next world. Alas! you take to the regions of souls your own individual assets; they will accompany you there; they will be in Court, as it were to judge you. They will elevate you, or degrade you, placing you where you belong. Mr. X.—for such we shall call him—had a splendid personality; his smile was angelic and his suavity sublimely beautiful, as he carried out his selfish schemes for self-aggrandizement in politics and the accumulation of wealth. In a worldly way he was a grand success; viewed from a spiritual standpoint he was a dismal failure—the **ASSETS** derived from his thoughts, his schemes, his aspirations, his acts towards his fellow-men in general, are enshrouded or encased in his spiritual nature, **LIKE A BIRTH-MARK** on the person and they are his **ASSETS** to commence housekeeping with in the next life; they are **HIS BAGGAGE** to the land of souls; they will accompany him in spite of himself. He can't burn them; he can't destroy them; by no possible method can they be annihilated, or even be hidden—they constitute his **ASSETS** as he takes a through train to the spheres above.

But there is another picture to be drawn. Mr. X.'s residence was regarded as a palace in those early days,

a large stone stable in the rear, in one part of which resided a woman who supported herself by doing odd-jobs for Mr. X. and the neighbors near by. She was uneducated, in many respects crude as to the stern conventionalities of this life, yet patterned after the immortal Lincoln, her innate nature was studded with jewels of rare worth, with aspirations vibrant with the touch of angelic fingers, with chords that responded to the whispers of loved ones in spirit life, and within her soul there were rare treasures, the effects of right thinking, of right acting, of right emotions, of everything that was lovely, ennobling and beautiful; a gem, she was, with a rough, uncouth exterior,—crude, perhaps, in speech, yet sublime in her views of life and its responsibilities. Life to her was one continual heroic struggle exerted in behalf of her children, then nearly self-sustaining. In all her labors and struggles, she maintained a cheerful aspect, for she heard whispers, sweet with love, and soul-enchanting, and they seemed to emanate from the very atmosphere of her room, giving her strength, comfort, happiness, and encouragement. She lived in an atmosphere where angels loved to linger; and her soul was vibrant to their touch, her thoughts responsive to theirs, her aspirations in harmony with theirs, and her nature in tune with the Infinite, as it were, and though crude in some respects, yet like the immortal Lincoln, she had seraphic visions, soul-enchanting dreams, and spiritual experiences, that rendered the hardship of life lighter to bear. But by and by the struggle of life weakened her, the hectic flush of consumption came upon her cheek and she was unable to work, and her food, the refuse of Mr. X.'s table, afforded her ample nourishment. The crusts of bread, the fragments of pie and cake, the picked bones, etc., afforded her and her children ample nourishment, until finally she heard seraphic music in the air, followed by sweet whispers of love, telling her that her death on this day would come, just as the evening sun kissed the vines and flowers that clustered around her window, thus preparing her for the change. Her children were by her side. The wistful, affectionate gaze of the mother enveloped them in a halo of love as they knelt by her side, and repeated the

love-prayer she had taught them, and her features were illuminated with a divine halo as she gazed upon them and gave them her blessing and consigned them to the tender care of a neighbor, whose soul was on the responsive plane. The setting sun finally sent its rays through the cluster of vines and flowers, and under their serene influence she passed away—a beautiful death, indeed.

The next day there was, strange to say, two funerals. Mr. X. had died the very day old Aunt Bentley, the old odd-job woman did, from the effects of a cancerous growth. In the fine residence in front there was ostentatious display; flowers, nature's jewels, added their serenity, sweetness and love to the occasion. The Masons were there to officiate and care for his remains in accordance with the rites of that noted body. The choir sent forth angelic music, but the minister's voice sounded sepulchral as he gave his stereotyped funeral discourse to the bereaved mourners. From the spirit side of life this funeral was a vapid desert place, void of anything beautiful or lovely.

But in the rear was another funeral of the poverty-stricken old woman. Several of the neighbors were present to assist on this mournful occasion. The coffin was extremely plain; the only flowers and vines present were those plucked from the window, and they seemed to embrace it with filial affection. But there is another scene to portray. The Angels of Light and Love were there, and they gave the ascended spirit a most cordial greeting.

Another scene followed. Mr. X. stood not far away on the spirit side of life, with all of the **ASSETS** of earth life that pass as coin in the spirit realms, and those **ASSETS** belonged exclusively to a sphere attached closely to earth, somewhat dark and somber, and above which he could not then go. But the poor old woman, her **ASSETS** were intrinsically valuable, and she could ascend by virtue thereof to a higher sphere.

We caution you, reader, if you live a selfish life like X., your **ASSETS** in spirit life will consign you to the lower spheres—perhaps in darkness and gloom, and there to remain until you redeem yourself. While if

your **ASSETS** are like those of old Mrs. Bentley, the odd-job woman, your life in the future will be serene and happy and your progress rapid. Do good and be good in your earthly career, and your spiritual **ASSETS** will constantly increase, thus aiding in establishing the Religion of Goodness.

SPIRITS CONFINED IN PRISON.

No doubt there are spirits in prison more closely confined, and more hardened than any of the convicts of earth. In darkness—sometimes almost impenetrable—and in a gloom almost too intolerable to bear, they live, not able to always fully realize the great change that has taken place in their forlorn condition. The very atmosphere is in many respects more stifling than in the deepest cave of earth; the sounds that echo from their weird surroundings are dismal, sepulchral, and convey no ray of hope, no indication of future joy, for there the morning is never ushered in with its vast wealth of loveliness, grandeur, and the animated scenes of life—darkness continually!

Spirits in prison!

Yes, millions upon millions of them. They have been consigned to this dreary, dark, desolate prison, a desert-like place never kissed by a ray of solar light, and never illuminated by the phosphorescent glow arising from the spiritual illumination of the higher spheres—consigned to that hideous place by the Laws of Nature, inherent in their own being. Their very lives are a hideous stain on even the deplorable conditions in which they are compelled to live—no pen is capable of fully portraying the dreadful misery of spirits in prison. A Black Hand assassin is there; he was bred in crime, cultured only in devilishness, and innately a demon of the darkest hue. He murdered without a single remorseful emotion. Ilis

face was never tear-stained with pity, and loving sympathy had no place in his hideous nature. An angelic aspiration, iridescent with love for all mankind, even of the faintest kind, never touched the inner soul of his dark nature, for therein was a desert waste. Even there, in almost impenetrable darkness, he has not a remorseful thought, not a vibration of pity—he is a demon still, a spirit in prison, a miserable degenerate, and is gradually wasting away. As time passes on, his eyes grow more fiendish in expression, his features more satanic ghastly, his consciousness more dim, and his whole being is a seething mass of corruption. The light of his mind is flickering like that of an exhausted lamp; his thoughts are diabolical, confused and feeble, and void of any high and holy aspiration; he is gradually dying—dying in a spirit prison, his life, his mind, his consciousness being dissipated—dissolved back into the desert waste,—the **BLACK HAND DEMON** has been practically annihilated as a conscious entity. A scene like this has occurred in spirit life. The God of Nature, the God of Immutable Law, or the God of Principle never forces upon any individual immortality. The scorpion sometimes stings itself to death, and so are the members of the Black Hand Society gradually building up their natures so calloused with crime, that when once in prison on the spirit side of life they gradually perish from their own stings, adding new material to the dreary waste they occupy. We are now voicing the opinion of those high in spirit life, who assert that immortality is only conferred on those who gain it by **BEING GOOD**, and **DOING GOOD**; it is never forced on any one, and many spirits in prison are too depraved, too demon-like, to even wish for it, and finally they are extinguished.

Endless progression is for only those who gain it by **BEING GOOD** and **DOING GOOD**. Retrogression is for the demons of earth and spirit life, until at last the light of their soul is extinguished, gone out forever. Of course many spirits in prison thoroughly reform, gradually grow better and are finally redeemed, advancing rapidly when they once see the light, and become great helpers on the spirit side of life. But there are mortals in prison on earth life, some with souls illuminated

with the true spirit of reformation. There are Carl Arnold and William Harvey, as set forth in the New York Herald of Feb. 2, 1908. In a few months from that date they stepped from the Kansas state penitentiary at Lansing free men, owing their freedom to the literary accomplishments of the former, cultivated and developed during more than a decade as a convict. More than thirteen years ago Arnold and Harvey, then boys of less than twenty years, were convicted of the murder of Mayor John Marsh, at Kinsley, and sentenced to death.

Under the Kansas law the governor must first sign a death warrant before the death penalty can be imposed. As no Kansas governor has for years signed such a warrant, death sentence in Kansas is equivalent to a sentence to life imprisonment in the state penitentiary at Lansing, where the law requires that condemned convicts be taken to await the signing of the death warrant by the state's chief executive.

While visiting at Lansing several months ago the attention of Governor Hoch was attracted to Arnold, on whom the authorship of a book entitled "The Kansas Inferno," had just been fastened by the prison officials. The book deals with the Kansas prison system and was written by Arnold during his imprisonment. Several poems written by the convict were also shown to the Governor.

One poem, which is as follows, did more to hasten the exercise of clemency by the Governor than had the protests of all the citizens of Kinsley done to delay it:

I cannot fawningly implore,
As feeble, false hearts can;
But in humility before
The power that bars my prison door
I plead as man to man.

Oft folly more than vice appears
In errors we have made,
The ideal that the man reveres
Is not the dream of early years—
Youth's brief delusions fade.

Though hearts embittered still retain

A grudge for old mistakes,
Excessive penalties are vain—
The long monotony of pain
No restitution makes.

The ancient eye for eye decree
God has Himself destroyed;
Still speaks that Voice from Calvary,
Shall Shylocks with their ghoulisn plea
Make this commandment void?

Ay, blessed are the merciful;
Oh, Christian heart, relent!
For sins of folly, faults of will,
I kneel at Mercy's tribunal
A contrite penitent.

Long have I been with Sorrow. Long
The agonizing years
Have held no freight of love, and song
And laughter—only pain and wrong,
And penitence and tears.

The coarse soul but lightly feels
The daily dole of ill;
But what distress each hour reveals
For him who in the heart conceals
Some aspirations still!

For home and love, for liberty
To toil as free men can,
Oh Hand of Fate that bars to me
The gates of Opportunity,
I plead, as man to man.

"Why, that man should be free and attached to the editorial staff of some magazine," remarked Governor Hoch, in commenting on the case after he had familiarized himself with Arnold's accomplishments.

The two young men in prison had been together in Oklahoma, then but recently opened to settlement, and were returning to the homes of their parents in one of the Western Kansas counties adjoining Edwards, of

which Kinsley is the county seat. When they reached Kinsley, where they camped for the night, both were out of money. They held up Mayor Marsh, with the intention of robbing him. Marsh resisted and was killed. Whether Arnold or Harvey killed the mayor has never been definitely established.

The two young men were captured the next morning and narrowly escaped lynching. They would have been lynched had it not been for the assurance of Samuel W. Vandivert, then district judge at Kinsley, but now a practising attorney in New York. Judge Vandivert made speedy arrangements for the trial of Arnold and Harvey, sentenced them to death and pledged the angry citizens that he would come to Topeka and personally insist that Governor Morrill sign the death warrant for the execution of the two young men. This for a time allayed sentiment and prevented mob violence.

Judge Vandivert did visit Governor Morrill and insist that the death penalty be imposed, but Governor Morrill would not sign the warrant. People at Kinsley were greatly incensed at the Governor, and the intense feeling against Arnold and Harvey has never subsided.

Governor Hoch, intensely interested in Arnold, felt that the sentiment at Kinsley was largely based on resentment and was revengeful in nature. With this spirit in the treatment of criminals he has little or no patience. Believing that both young men will make good citizens he has commuted their sentences to eighteen years in the penitentiary each. In speaking of Arnold's case, Governor Hoch said:

"My attention was first attracted to Arnold by his book. When I next visited Lansing I asked to see him, curious to know the manner of man who had written so well. At first meeting he did not impress me greatly. A few days after my return to Topeka I received a letter from him which reawakened my interest, as it indicated the man's mentality."

The letter received by Governor Hoch from Arnold, now a part of the pardon files at the executive office, is as follows:

"Dear Governor: Being an emotional fool, I could profit but little by the interview with which you favored me, and therefore beg that Portia be given an audience,

though I know that her thought is not new to you. If I cannot obtain a release under a Governor whose attitude in regard to prisoners seems to me ideal, I shall indeed lose hope. Yours respectfully, Carl Arnold."

To the letter were attached the following lines from the great trial scene in the "Merchant of Venice":

The quality of mercy is not strained,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath; it is twiced blessed;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
It is an attribute to God Himself,
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice.

Within a few days after the receipt of his letter one of Arnold's poems, entitled, "Man to Man," was placed in the hands of Governor Hoch by the convict's mother.

Arnold had taught a school one term when he started on the trip to Oklahoma which ended with the tragedy at Kinsley, but his education was meagre. When he first went to Lansing as a convict he was employed in the penitentiary mine. From the outset he was a good prisoner. Good behavior won him a place in the prison tailor shop. It was then his study and development began.

Noticing his thirst for knowledge and taste for literature, the chaplain became interested in Arnold and obtained his transfer to employment in the library. Arnold was employed in the library for nearly six years and every spare hour was devoted to either reading or writing. Writing the book, "The Kansas Inferno," and smuggling the manuscript out for publication through a discharged convict got Arnold in his first trouble with the prison authorities and finally caused his removal from the library back to his old place in the tailor shop.

For months after the book was published the prison officials could not determine its authorship, but it was

finally fastened on Arnold. They found little or no fault with the book itself, as it deals only with the prison system, sticks closely to facts and does not show personal prejudices, but the violation of the rules in smuggling the manuscript out could not be overlooked and cost Arnold many privileges he had enjoyed.

The book was written at odd times. The difficulties under which Arnold worked will be understood when it is considered that he was constantly under the surveillance during the five years he worked on the book, but no officer discovered what he was doing. In his introductory Arnold makes the following slight reference to the difficulties under which he labored while preparing his manuscript:

"If this book is wanting in literary merit, the author can plead his lack of natural ability, the defects of a self-educated mind and the fact that the book was written in odd moments saved from the almost constant toil of penal servitude and under the most depressing circumstances imaginable."

Arnold is quite proud of the book now and frequently refers to his authorship. In the book are given the daily routine of prison life, descriptions of the penitentiary, the various manners of employment, punishments and rewards, interspersed with observations regarding the advantages and weaknesses of the whole Kansas prison system, as viewed by a convict. In his concluding chapter Arnold makes a number of interesting recommendations for the betterment of a prison. The striking feature of the matter is that with one exception the recommendations have been adopted. No provision has yet been made to pay convicts the profits accruing from their labor, less the cost of their maintenance, which Arnold advocated in his book. Regarding this matter Arnold wrote in his book:

"As noted in a previous chapter, the most expedient and certain way to reform a prisoner is through an appeal to his self-interest. As surely as you can convince him that honesty and industry will promote his personal happiness, so surely you can reform him. Experience—the universal experience of a hundred years—has amply demonstrated that he cannot be so convinced with sermons and tracts, mingled with beatings and torture;

then appeal to his understanding by a sort of object lesson that he cannot fail to understand; let him see and feel the benefits of the course you would have him pursue.

"By giving the prisoner the profit of his labor, you will give him an absorbing interest and pleasure in his work, for which he now feels only a sensation of hate—the fury of the bond slave. You will encourage him, open before his dull eyes a new world of which he knows but little; for the average criminal is familiar enough with poverty and hard shift, but with him the responsibilities of property and the infinite delight of ownership are untried. Under the regenerate force of such conditions his comparative estimate of things will be altered, and it will soon dawn on him that the best dollar is the honest dollar, and that the returns of honesty and industry are more to be desired than the delusive fruits of crime that delight for a brief moment a depraved palate and then invariably turn to ashes and bitterness."

Arnold has as yet made no definite plans for the future beyond a determination to spend several months with his mother, who resides at Kansas City. "I do not know what I will do," he said at the prison. "My time will not be up for several months. I know little or nothing of the outside world now. Nearly fifteen years have brought many changes to a society I did not then understand. I think I understand it now, but I will make no plans until I have opportunity to look around and convince myself that I am doing the best thing. First of all, though, I must visit a good long time with my mother. She has been my firmest, most faithful friend.

Harvey attracts much less attention than Arnold. He has less mental capacity and has read less. Still he is equipped to make his way well when released from prison. During his confinement he has learned two trades. He is a first-class printer and is said to be the best cabinet-maker ever developed at Lansing. He expects to find work at the latter trade immediately after his release.

Thus Carl Arnold and William Harvey will escape from a prison in mortal life, and you may rest assured they will never become spirits in prison when death shall have summoned them to a higher sphere in the realm

of souls. The divine light has penetrated their very inner being most beautifully, and in the future they will **BE GOOD**, they will **DO GOOD** and thus fulfill the law underlying the constructive principles of Nature throughout all the regions of space.

If you are selfish, ever receiving but never giving, always deaf to those vibrations that come from a despairing soul in deep distress, then you are gradually building a spirit prison for yourself. If you are a miser, hoarding your wealth for your own special enjoyment, never listening to the tender, pathetic appeals for Charity, then by degrees you are constructing a prison for yourself in the laud of souls. If you devote your whole life to sin, to murder, rapine, and violence, and are a degenerate, then you are weaving your own spirit bars that will confine you in the realm of souls to a desolate, inhospitable plane, and in the course of time you will be blotted out of existence. You can in earth life build a spirit prison for yourself on the spirit side of existence, or you can by **BEING GOOD** and **DOING GOOD** construct for yourself a Mansion in the realm of souls which in beauty and grandeur surpasses the loftiest imagination of any earthly mortal. The lesson is before you; immortality and future bliss and advancement will be your heritage if you so choose; but if your depravity reaches to degeneracy, then your final extinguishment as a mortal being will surely follow. Choose this day which road you will take.

TAKE AN INVENTORY OF YOUR SOUL.

I.

The wind was blowing through the streets with the fierceness of March, though the calendar said it was April, says the Christian Union. A timid, uncertain ring brought a member of the household to the door, who found standing on the stoop an old woman. Her dress gave every evidence of self-respecting poverty. Her face was wrinkled, but as though kindly smiles and sympathetic tears had been the tools used by Father Time to etch her life history thereon.

"Duzza a lady named —— live here?" The name was so mispronounced that it was asked again, and then hurriedly followed the reason of the call: "She did not send this letther to the right place, shure! This place is a coal yard, shure; nobody lives at a coal yard," she interjected, seemingly astonished that the location of the coal yard was not known. "This letther," she continued, holding out a letter the listener recognized as having been mailed the evening before, "the postman gave me to-day. Sometimes I resave a letther—not often, though. I live at 52 and this is 122, and I tore it open, never looking, and when I read it, and it was to a milliner to come and make a hat, sez I to meself, 'Shure this is, Friday, now, and the lady will be disappointed, she want-in' her hat for Sunday; and I'll just go over and tell her, as she didn't know how to direct the letther,' and then I thought maybe"—and here an appealing look came into the kindly face, an entreating tone into the voice—"I was afeared that some gurl, who would be glad of the work, would lose it, bekase the lady thought as how she didn't attind to her business; and ye know she couldn't shure, if she didn't git yer letther."

The listener stood dumb. A walk of over a mile in that raw, fierce wind, to benefit two people whom she had never seen!

"You are very kind," began the listener.

"Shure, what else are we here fer but kindness? 'Deed, it might make a great difference, all round; for if the gurl got this work, she might get more, and ye might not be so happy if ye did not have yer hat. I've seen a time I cared; it don't matter now, I'm old. I've got nothin' to do now but the little things; me stren'th is gone, but not me heart, thank God! That's where it ever was. D'ye think ye can find the gurl, and give her the work? Shure, I'd be glad to hunt for her; I've lived on that street thirty years. Could I find her for ye, d'ye think? She'd have time to make it to-morry, Saturday, and then ye'd both be happy." And the kindly face was full of hope and interest.

And only the day before the world seemed so inhuman, so very indifferent whether a brother stood firm or fell by the wayside! The kindly, shabby figure went down the street, never dreaming of the lesson she had taught.

What a grand and beautiful lesson of life is presented in the above, one that thrills the soul with pleasurable emotions. Here was an old woman—one who could not speak the English language correctly, and whose personal appearance showed that she was from the lower walks of life, yet she was imbued with feelings that were really angelic. In this world of ours, it is very rare that you see a purely unselfish act, one where self is entirely forgotten, and the good of some poor, forlorn soul, the only end sought.

II.

An Old Man, venerable with the fruitage of nearly a century, was sitting one evening in the door of his vine-clad cottage, contemplating the beauty and grandeur of creation, and wondering what was really essential to attain salvation. A gentle shower had been falling, and all nature seemed to be tinged with colors that were especially borrowed, seemingly, from heaven for the occasion. The smile of one of God's angels could not have been richer than the expression of nature on that eventful evening, as this Old Man was contemplating the best means to attain heaven. The overhanging vines clustering around his cottage, and the pendent drops of rain from leaf and branch, illuminated with the hues of the rainbow, were scenes that made a deep impression on

his mind. The very air was rich in the fragrance of fruit and flower, and all things in the material world seemed to radiate a divine influence. This venerable personage was standing on the divide that separates the two worlds, considering a momentous question—the best means to attain salvation. As far as his eyes could see were rolling fields of grain, extensive orchards bending under loads of luscious fruit, and large herds of cattle feeding in green pastures. Standing in the sunset of his life, rich in this world's goods, his mind became suddenly awakened, that at no distant day he must take his departure to the spiritual realms. He pondered the situation well. He had large possessions here; would he have the like there?

He had a vine-clad cottage here, surrounded by flowerbeds, lawns and fountains; would he be as highly favored there?

The world that sunset evening was beautiful to him, and all things glistened with a roseate hue; would life in the future be equally as pleasant?

He said to this one "go," to another "come," and they obeyed him; would he have servants over there?

Thus he contemplated as he stood on the divide that separates the seen from the unseen. He had been strictly honest here, and his whole life in that respect had been above reproach. As he looked at a flower-arbored grave at his left, his mind turned towards a lovely wife, and he wondered whether she, too, would meet him in the celestial regions.

It is natural for the aged to contemplate such things as they stand on the divide, where you must stand, where I must stand, where all must sometime stand.

When one commences to contemplate self, to scrutinize self, to analyze self, to look within and see the contents of the soul, then there is hope for such a person. This old man had become suddenly awakened, and was inclined to take an inventory of self; just as you should do; just as everybody should do, and see to what extent one is prepared for heaven. And then, while meditating, the mist gathered over the setting sun, and a radiance shone therefrom that fell upon the green pastures, the golden fields of grain, the rich fruitage of tree and vine, and a

cloud of rainbow-tinted light fell like a benediction across the grave of his devoted wife. All nature had been kind to him; of crops he never had a failure, epidemics had escaped his flocks, and his granaries were never empty. How bountiful Nature had been to him! What had he done to merit all this which had been so benignly showered upon him.

Was he bountiful towards others?

No!

Was his charitable hand ever extended?

No!

Did he ever strive to lighten the load of even one of earth's children?

No!

Did he ever take especial pains to utter encouraging words to one of earth's poor struggling mortals?

Never!

Had he ever consented to bear some of the hard burdens of others?

Not so far as he could remember!

Was there any one, so far as he knew, who would deeply regret his death?

Probably not!

Did he ever send forth kind thoughts towards those who are struggling with poverty?

He had not time even for that!

III.

As this Old Man continued to take an inventory of the treasures of his soul, and found none, in utter despair, his head resting on a dainty pillow of the chair, he fell into a profound slumber, and he experienced a remarkable dream. A venerable sage stood by his side clothed in a robe of dazzling brightness and purity. His countenance was all aglow with a divine expression of love, and his voice was musically sweet and tender: "My friend, I see that thou hast been taking an inventory of thy soul-treasures—treasures that can only enrich thee in spirit-life. Find'st there any?"

"Nay, Master," responded the wealthy magnate. "I find not even one treasure! Alas! Alas! I am lost!"

I have never done one purely unselfish act, and shall pass to the celestial regions poor indeed!"

"Look in the distance! What see'st thou?"

"Old Mother Hemstead's home—poor, old, poverty-stricken woman," responded he in tremulous voice.

"She is stricken with sickness; sorrow broods over her little household. A dark cloud is there, and as pure a soul as ever lived is prostrated on a bed of sickness. She nursed you when sick with small-pox."

"Yes, Master."

"And your wife, too, whose body is lying in yon flower-embowered grave?"

"Yes, Master, and she did it well."

"And when your two children were sick with scarlet fever, nigh unto death, she watched them tenderly, and it was her healing magnetism that saved them?"

"Yes, yes, poor woman, she was an angel to them."

"And when the cattle broke into your field of grain the other night, she hastened over to inform you, and you simply returned a cold thank you!"

"It is as you state."

"Your soul is as barren as the wild, arid waste. You have, so far as I can see, no treasures in heaven, and you will go there a pauper, spiritually. You have taken an inventory of your soul and find nothing to your credit of any value."

"But, dear Master, what shall I do to be saved?"

"As one having authority, as a supreme judge, you stand before me self-convicted, and the sentence is self-imposed. I do not condemn you; you do that yourself. I shall leave you soon. Pure, unselfish acts only receive the recognition of the wise sages of spirit-life; they alone are your only treasures in the spiritual realm. Go back to your possessions on earth; think kindly of everybody; send forth thoughts beaming with charity; let every aspiration scintillate with love for all humanity. Encourage the disheartened; assist the one fallen by the wayside. Ever have a kind word for those in distress. Let your life be as bountiful as this outpouring of nature on this beautiful evening. I now leave you with my benediction and blessing."

IV.

The Old Man then awakened from his trance-like state and gazed vacantly around him. The sun had set, and gradually the drapery of night was encircling his possessions. He passed over to the grave of his wife, and bending low, in tremulous tone he said:

"My darling Mary lies there; there my two children, who died in infancy." With tear-stained eyes, and voice heaving with emotion, and hands uplifted heavenward, he consecrated his life, his fortune, his all to humanity! and then he wept over his darling's grave, regretting that he had never been aroused before to see his duty, and do it.

Going to the house, he ordered the servant to procure his horse and carriage, and he drove rapidly to town, to the residence of the leading physician and ordered him to attend to the sickness of old Mother Hemstead.

"Oh!" replied the doctor, "I guess she can wait until morning, or until I get ready. These charity cases are very troublesome."

"This is not a charity case. Go at once and I will pay you."

Thus fortified the physician went to test his skill on one who was sick nigh unto death, and who had been sorely neglected.

The Old Man hastened to the grocery, and obtaining a good store of delicacies, such as the sick require, and procuring a nurse, he hastened to the humble cottage of old Mother Hemstead. The physician was there when he arrived, and that lonely cottage was illuminated with a light divine. Radiant beings, all aglow with God-like qualities, and who had been instrumental in awakening the Old Man from his deeply seated lethargy, were there bending low over a lovely scene which was being enacted by the children of earth.

Old Mother Hemstead was poor, very poor, and to have this noble outburst of kindness from one whom she regarded as hard-hearted, gave her a new lease of life, and she rapidly recovered, and thereafter arrangements were made by the Old Man that all her simple wants should be supplied during the remainder of her life. From that time his whole career was changed. He received a bap-

tism from heaven. His vast possessions were dispensed with a charitable hand, and every thought and act of his life was purely unselfish.

Take an inventory of your soul now. Have you to-day, yesterday, last month, or at any time during the year, done a purely unselfish act? Have you lightened the burdens of any one? Have you cheered some care-worn heart? Have you sent forth kind thoughts to enrich the moral atmosphere? If not active in those directions, then you must be spiritually deficient; and you will find yourself poor indeed when you shall have been ushered into the world above. Take an inventory of your soul-deeds to-day and act accordingly.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF TIM.

“Don't let the song go out of your life;
Though it chance sometime to flow
In a minor strain, it will blend again,
With the major tone you know.
What though shadows rise to obscure life's skies,
And hide for a time the sun;
They sooner will lift and reveal the rift
If you let the melody run.

Don't let the song go out of your life,
Though your life may have lost its thrill;
Though the tremulous note should die in your throat,
Let it sing in your spirit still.
There is never a pain that hides not some gain,
And never a cup of rue
So bitter to sup but what in the cup
Lurks a measure of sweetness too.

—Kate R. Stiles.

As set forth by H. Belloe in the London Post, sailors sing. They have a song for work and songs for every part of their work, and they have songs of reminiscence and of tragedy, and many farcical songs; some brutal songs, songs of repose and songs in which is packed the desire for a distant home. Soldiers also sing, at least in those armies where soldiers are still soldiers. And the line, which is the core and body of any army, is the most singing of them all. Those men who marched behind Caesar in his triumph sang a song and the words of it still remain; the armies of Louis XIV. and of Napoleon, of the Republic and even of Algiers, made songs of their own which have passed into the great treasury of European letters.

They sang in that march which led men to the assault at Hastings, for it was written by those who saw the column of knights advancing to the foot of the hill that Taillefer was chosen for his great voice and rode before the host, tossing his sword into the air and catching it again by the hilt (a difficult thing to do), and singing of Charlemagne and of the vassals who had died under Roncesvalles.

Song also illustrates and strengthens and vivifies all common life, and on this account what is left of our peasantry have harvest songs, and there are songs for mowing and songs for the midwinter rest, and there is even a song in the south of England for the gathering of honey.

Indeed, all men sing at their labor, or would so sing did not dead convention forbid them. You will say there are exceptions, as lawyers, usurers and officers; but there are no exceptions to this rule where all the man is working and is working well and is producing and is not ashamed. Rowers sing, and their song is called barcarole; and even men holding the tiller who have nothing to do but hold it tend to sing a song. And I will swear to this, that I have heard stokers when they were hard pressed starting a sort of crooning chorus together, which shows that there is hope for us all."

Without songs, without music, without their soul-stirring vibrations passing through the atmosphere, scintillating, seemingly, with smiles from the Infinite Himself,

all things would become a barren waste, and human beings be reduced in the course of time to savagery. There is soul-sweetness in music, an emotion therein that seems to cast choice flowers in one's pathway, as one journeys along with a "song in his life" that renders joyous every moment of fleeting time. It is said that on one occasion in this city Minnie Cultra, a cripple, 14 years old, known as "Little Sunshine," an angelic name, typical of beauty and joy, and without technical musical training, proved to be the star attraction at a recital on one occasion in the Fine Arts building, even though a number of well known musicians appeared on the same program.

The recital was given by the pupils of Mrs. Charles L. Krum for the benefit of the Fallon School for Crippled Children. Five hundred patronesses of the school and friends of Mrs. Krum and her pupils were present, as well as forty-two crippled children, who occupied boxes.

Minnie Cultra—arms, legs, and body paralyzed—was carried on the stage and sang the old song, "There Is a Green Hill Far Away." Tears came to the eyes of nearly every auditor, choice echoes from minds that had been awakened. One woman became half hysterical as she listened to the soul-enchanting tune, and was helped from the hall.

There was a foretaste of heaven in the sublime soul of Minnie Cultra, and that foretaste bore golden fruitage, exalting aspirations, and for a time on the above occasion she seemed to be in "tune with the Infinite," if that were possible. She must, at least, have been encircled in the sympathetic, loving arms and cheering embrace of some Angel of Light and Love from the Sphere of Divine Poesy and Music, thus indicating that cripples should be tenderly cared for. Yes, "There is a green hill far Away" for little Minnie Cultra, and when her lovely spirit shall have broken away from the shackles that bind it to earth she will see that "green hill," and the enchanting scenes of Paradise, and enjoy spiritual luxuries of which the nabobs of earth never dreamed, and which they can not enjoy until they shall have progressed to the same spiritual plane on the spirit side of life.

Here is another peculiar case. Timothy Carroll's soul was brimful of music. He was not famous as a musician yet he was recognized, however, as having a charming baritone voice, as full of poetic fragrance, as a flower is of the essence of sweetness and purity. Tim, as he was called, was a cripple, and so badly deformed in some respects that he often said, "I feel ashamed of myself." Only on one occasion did he ever appear on the stage at any theatre, and then he sang "Home, Sweet Home," his own peculiar rendition, his own sentiments, his own pathetic appeal for a "home, sweet home." His voice, tremulous with tender emotions that seemed to flow into his soul from some dear sweet angel, illuminating it with a divine light and pathos, brought tears from his rural audience, and while he was singing nearly every eye in this country gathering was moved to tears. And when an audience is moved to tears by sympathetic vibrations that come laden with an angelic influence, apparently derived from the "Gardens of the Gods," one can then realize that a divine chord of human nature has been tenderly struck, and bears fruitage from the depths of the human soul.

On that occasion Tim seemed to be transformed from a cripple into a messenger right from the Courts of Heaven. He sang his "Home, Sweet Home," his features illuminated with the soft, mellow glow of a soul in close touch with the radiance and beauty of all things divine in the highest spirit sphere. Thus it is that sometimes one who is uncultured, and even totally ignorant of the scale in music, gets into the hearts of people in song, and excites tender emotions.

After this triumph in the country, Tim drifted to the city. He was occupying only a sort of mid-way station in music—a station always existing between those who are uncultured, and those like Mozart or Beethoven; there nature had placed him, and he naturally drifted towards saloons, brothels, house of ill-fame and low places of resort generally, under the thought he could do good there. A strange combination was Tim, standing on this midway station—looking with supreme disgust and contempt at the crudeness, vileness and sinfulness on one side, and with joy at the culture, refinement and educa-

tion manifested on a plane higher, which he knew he could never reach while on this earth. The parlors of houses of sin he often frequented by special invitation, to sing, and a strange, uncanny fascination he exerted over the inmates. The songs and tunes were all his own; the words as pure as the aspirations of an angel; a medley of enchanting music that seemed to rivet the attention of the Magdalens, and they treated him with superstitious reverence and awe, and freely gave him contributions of their sin-tainted money, never failing to make other appointments for him to call.

Tim was never coarse or vulgar in these dens of infamy and sin. He never sang a ribald song there. Coarse and vulgar words never sprang from his lips to go forth as Imps of Darkness, to imperil the lives of others.

Finally we must draw the curtain over the life of Tim. Stricken with a fatal disease, he was taken to a private hospital by a benevolent elderly gentleman, with instructions to tenderly care for him.

Tim grew worse day by day; and in just that proportion or degree the spirit world drew nearer, and delightful phantoms, as he called them, clustered around his bed, and bouquets of flowers, phantoms though they were to him, seemed to exhale an aroma that was delightful to inhale, giving him a foretaste of the beautiful gardens in spirit life where angels walk, where poets weave their soul enchanting rhymes, where wise sages congregate to talk of fairy Nature and her atoms, molecules, vibrations, and ultimate perfection in all evolutionary processes.

Tim was gradually dying, and his presence in the hospital seemed to fascinate the nurses, the physicians and those in attendance from day to day. They bent over him with a tender pathos in their faces and sweet vibrations in their finger tips as they administered nourishment from time to time. The physician said he could not live—"might die at any time."

It was a beautiful spring day; the trees were sending out their buds and flowers to be kissed by the sunshine and to be baptized by the heaven-born dewdrops. Tim from his window opening towards the west, could see the clambering vines and the trees and flowers, bathed in the sunshine as Day was retiring to give place to the star-

gemmed Night. All at once the dying man, with a face illuminated with an angelic halo, sat upright in bed, as if under spirit influence, and commenced singing, his baritone voice, thrillingly sweet, as if he had borrowed a tune and verses from some angelic minstrel who only sang in the Gardens of the Gods. For a few minutes only nurses, physicians and attendants stood with bowed heads and tear-stained eyes as they listened to this dying man's wonderful voice, and just as the setting sun was casting its retiring rays on his cot, and the soulful vibrations of his voice were going forth laden with the rich fruitage of love, purity and charity, he fell back on his cot and passed to the realms of souls, with his features aglow with an angelic light—a scene never to be forgotten. Thus Tim passed away; a frequenter of saloons, dens of vice and houses of ill-repute, yet as pure as an Angel of Light and Love. We had rather be Tim, living off of so-called tainted money obtained in houses of sin, and sending forth in his rich baritone voice an influence that had redeemed many souls, than to be a wealthy nabob, reveling in wealth and the gross pleasures of a sin-soiled soul—a soul destitute wholly of the ennobling qualities possessed now by the immortal Tim.

“Don't let the song go out of your life!”

It never can go, if you will **THINK GOOD, BE GOOD,** and **DO GOOD** in all the walks of life, and follow the teachings of these **HOME CIRCLE SERMONS.**

THE IDEAL NURSE IN AN IDEAL WORK.

Each one who is ushered into this life with its sunshine and storms, should realize that he is a **SOUL-BUILDER**, a builder of an angel or a devil, and should have blooming in his nature the flowers of goodness, charity, self-sacrifice, and love towards all humanity. As sunshine evolves our coal beds and many other things that serenely smile in Nature, so should each one unfold traits of character that go forth like rays of light for the benefit of all.

Whoever you are, wherever you are, and whatever you are, you are the sole architect of your own character, and can mould it as you please. You are indeed a **SOUL-BUILDER**, and if you act in accordance with Divine Laws your whole nature will expand with a sublime radiance, revealing the angel within to the external world. The flower with its winsome expression in rainbow tinted colors, a veritable Queen of Beauty, will, when plucked, retain its fragrance as long in the home of the thief or Magdalen, as in the palace of a king. The food the thief eats adds lustre to his eyes and strength to his muscles, just the same as it would if eaten by a multimillionaire. Nature smiles approvingly on all in the external world, leaving each one to utilize her gifts as they see fit in **SOUL-BUILDING**. When divested of its material covering, the soul stands forth just as you have constructed it—either laden with the grand, lovely, outbursting fruitage of angelic qualities, or somewhat dwarfed, or divested, it may be, altogether of angelic traits, a miserable, distorted specimen of your own handiwork as connected with earth-life.

You are your own artisan, your own architect, your own agent in your own **SOUL-BUILDING**, in shaping your future destiny. You can not become a soul-builder unless you have material therefor, and you must furnish the same, just as the tree furnishes its own leaves; just as the tiny stem produces its own flowers; just as the

sky weaves its own rainbow; just as the peach tree sends forth its blossoms, then its sweet perfume, and then its own precious fruit; just as the seed or rootlet becomes a clambering vine, with flowers nestling thereon as if the thoughts of angels. In the same manner and by the same divine impulse, your life must bear as its buds, its blossoms, its flowers, and its rich fruitage, kindly thoughts, pure aspirations, divine impulses, charitable deeds and loving kindness.

To become a **SOUL-BUILDER**, acceptable in the sight of angels, your whole life must vibrate with good deeds, and be a perennial fountain, from which flows kind, charitable thoughts and acts, assisting some one less fortunate than self. As the golden grains of wheat, fanned by genial winds, heaven's health-giving breath, and moistened by rains that come because of Nature's call, are developed into health-giving properties as you eat the same, changing to lustre in your eyes, changing to rosy tints on the face, changing to crimson blood, and the beautiful flesh that nestles on the cheek of maiden, so lovely, so captivating—and to the same degree will "living for others" in the highest and holiest sense of those words, render your soul grandly beautiful, you the **SOUL-BUILDER**, the architect of what will be yours in the future.

As illustrating one of the many phases of **SOUL-BUILDING**, the life of Mrs. Jane Elliott, of New York, affords an example. When she passed to spirit life, her last cent exhausted, she left a letter clutched in her hands, to whom addressed no one then knew:

"My Dear One: I have written to you before of a strange dream I had; it might have been a spirit vision, induced by some angelic messenger, a sort of telephone message from an exalted home in heaven, where thoughts bear a divine incense that seem to add a delicate sweetness to the perfume of the flowers, and the smiles of the angels therein. Be that as it may I seemed to be in that home, representing what I had made of myself. I looked before me, as in a mirror, and saw a strange being, how divinely beautiful! A glow on the face as if the brilliancy of the diamond had been dipped in the scintillating colors of the rainbow at the morning dawn, and transferred to the beaming features, so radiant, so di-

vinely beautiful! And the eyes, what charms therein, as they seemed to glisten, just as if some angel had illuminated them with thoughts that vibrated in harmony with the wisest sages of spirit life, just as nature vibrates in the flower, producing its rainbow tints and choice perfume. I gazed steadily at this Angel of Light, with intense admiration, and as I ardently wished that I could stand forth so angelic, reflecting so beautifully all that one could desire, my dear, angelic mother stood by my side, and said: 'My daughter, you are looking in a mirror and seeing yourself. Look at your body in the bed on earth. The hectic flush on your face, your cheeks shrunk-en, as if eaten away by disease, a sickly, worn out body. On earth you are now pinched by poverty, and every emotion of your life is tear-stained, as you survey the world in its selfishness. You have lived for others. Your life currents have flowed to others, as the sap of the tree flows to nourish the buds, then the blossoms, then the golden fruitage thereon. Your aspirations, your work and sacrifices for others have produced the angelic creature you saw, a perfect reflection of your real spirit self. In the hospitals, in charitable institutions, in poverty-stricken homes, in the capacity of a nurse, and in unselfishly ministering to the wants of the suffering and dying, you have produced the angel you saw in the mirror, unsuspectedly to you a reflection of yourself. Go back to earth, and in that worn-out body you will only survive for a few days.' My dear, dear one, thus in a dream, a vision, or in a sweet something that I can not explain, which touched in some mysterious way my soul-chords, I had this experience. At one time you were tenderly dear to me. My whole being was bathed in the sunshine of your love, and as you lovingly kissed me and pressed me to your heart, I felt supremely happy. There were then no tear-stains upon my soul; no skeletons of sorrow in the closet, no black outlook vibrating with sobs and moans, and weird images of dark despair. The world was sweet, and precious, and lovely then, with you by my side, with you in my life, in my thoughts, in my love, in my dreams. Your kisses were then precious to me, and your words of cheering love vibrated in my soul as if they had angelic sweetness and purity. Home then was overflowing with

the flowers of happiness, bearing as an incense the supreme love of unsullied souls. But this only lasted for a time, when you were wooed away from my side and home by the selfish wiles of a siren. But I tenderly cherished the recollection of our happy home, and you my ideal, my precious one, on whom I lavished all the affections of my soul,—I could not forget you even when you fell prostrate into the hands of another, and have ever considered you my dear, precious companion, even though now in the selfish embrace of a woman of the world, a Magdalen, a siren with charms of poisonous bewildering attractions. In imagination with my arms around your neck, and with my cheek pressed to your lips I live my life over”—

That was the unfinished letter found clutched with a death like grasp in the hand of Mrs. Jane Elliott. It appears from the history given her at the time that she had devoted her small fortune in relieving the distress of others, and was known as the Angel Nurse, as she was so kind, so exquisitely tender and sympathetic when ministering to others. From the letter it appears she had been married, but was abandoned by her husband, for whom she seemed to retain an undying affection, a sort of ideal dream that had never been realized in its completeness.

Jane Elliott was a **SOUL-BUILDER**, her generous, self-sacrificing nature, ennobling virtues, high and holy aspirations, and her pursuit of happiness through kindly deeds and charitable acts in an ideal work for the poor and unfortunate, had made her the veritable angel which she saw reflected in her vision, and which she mistook for some one distinct from herself. If you wish to build a soul of the fine texture and ideal nature of Jane Elliott, banish selfishness, and live in a world where the only object is to **DO GOOD** and **BE GOOD**.

TRY TO RENDER YOUR SOUL LUMINOUS.

How true it is that no one should live for himself alone. Nature points out a magnificent lesson. The tree, if it could talk, would not say, "I am independent of the earth;" the leaves would not say, "We are in no wise dependent on the body of the tree." The buds thereon would not declare their independence, and set up a distinct life of their own, for they soon turn into a beautiful flower, and then into luscious fruit, with its life-giving properties—all the result of the occult work of the soil, various gases, and sunshine, and which could not exist without moisture, rain, clouds, and various other agents too numerous to mention—each one dependent on all the others for its life and full development. The fruit-bearing tree has no degree of selfishness, unless held in abeyance by selfish man. It says to all, "Come and partake of my fruit, inhale its divine aroma, taste its fine qualities and feel its nutriment as it tingles in the veins, and gives to the cheeks their healthy glow."

Nature is wonderfully prodigal in her gifts, unless her powers are abridged by selfish man. In spite of him, however, the aroma of the flowers in the garden of the miser, like a fairy, floats off on the breeze, and adds its precious qualities to the world at large. What nature has produced is for the benefit of all. No partiality in the morning sunshine glow. The sunset artist paints a picture of divine beauty in the West, whose iridescent colors and scintillations gladden and refresh all who see it. No miser-like qualities there. All nature emanates from the one universal reservoir; every human being can trace his physical life to that source of all things. The miser, the ingrate, the supremely selfish, and the millionaire, have taken an undue share of that reservoir of nature, and appropriated the same to self instead of the general good.

The ideal man, the man who is in tune with the Infinite, as it were, and who acknowledges himself as only one part of the universal whole, is in kinship with all

others, only perhaps vibrating on a different plane. The ideal man (and what is true of him is also true of woman) is radiant with spiritual thoughts, with aspirations that are all aglow with angelic impulses, and whose pathway in life is illuminated by his own good deeds. The ideal man is **SELF-LUMINOUS**, and never shines by reflected light. Every good deed, every charitable thought, every high and holy aspiration, adds to that light of his soul, its inherent luminosity. Such a man cannot be a King, an Emperor, a Sultan, a President or a High Official, because they are controlled by a "Constitution," by a code of laws, or by court officers or advisers, and are in no sense **SELF-LUMINOUS**, but shine almost wholly by borrowed light, and that light is always flickering, evanescent, and never permanent.

The true Saviors of the world—Buddha, Confucius, and many others—were **SELF-LUMINOUS**; but that **LUMINOSITY** is not like sunshine, like the electric illumination, or any earthly light—it is a divine glow, a radiance that is undefinable, a divine expression like the aroma of a flower, or the smile of the mother as she bends over her first born, singing a sweet lullaby song. This subtle **LUMINOSITY** exhibits your spiritual unfoldment, and in all cases fixes your status in spirit life. All souls are not **LUMINOUS**, for this luminosity has only well defined source, it is merely the emanation or divine radiance that flows as naturally from good deeds and pure aspirations, as the perfume of the flowers rises in the morning dawn, sweetening the vanishing dewdrops as they ascend heavenward on rays of sunshine. The one with a divine radiance aglow in his whole nature, is never rich in this world's goods, for the hoarding of gold, for its sake alone, and the selfish pleasures it brings, produces darkness instead of light. The **CHARACTER** of a man determines his inherent **LUMINOSITY**, hence cultivate that in the right direction. The profound thinker Dr. Madison C. Peters says:

"Character is a Greek word transferred, but not translated, and means that which is cut in or marked, as the impress on stamps, coins, or seals, and reveals the quality of the person or thing.

"Although it represents a moral quality it can be taken

in a wider significance, as that which distinguishes a man in his general bearing towards others in his everyday life. In this respect it can be acquired and is much influenced by training and environment.

"The laws of heredity exact their demands but to a great extent they can be modified by external surroundings. For instance, the child of savage parents cannot be expected to possess that refinement which is the heritage of centuries of civilization and culture; however, by careful training and by force of companionship and good example it can be so molded as to develop but few of the traits of its ancestry.

"Nature sometimes exhibits strange freaks in regard to character. We often find wayward children the offspring of exemplary parents, and vice versa. Often two brothers, in disposition and manners, are far apart as the poles.

"Character is the fairest flower that blooms in the garden of life, but it is a sensitive plant and requires careful nursing. An unfavorable wind can chill and wither and dwarf its promise until it becomes an unsightly weed, offensive to all its surroundings. Good care and loving hands, however, can foster and nurture it into 'a thing of beauty and a joy forever.'

"We fondly pay our tribute to the cherished ones who have passed away, we never weary of recounting their acts, and in spirit we fain would call them back to earth again. Their lovable and lovely characters enshrined them in our heart of hearts and joyfully, if we could, would we turn back the cycle of time, once more to listen to their wisdom and their counsel.

"Who would not wish for the mighty Gladstone again, he who held the love and reverence of the entire world for his pure and blameless life, or the calm, patient McKinley, the man who showed us how to live, and taught us how to die, or the soft-voiced Tennyson, who struck Apollo's harp and evoked strains that will never be silent while language lives, or the sublime Beethoven who soared among angel choirs and brought their music down to earth?

"The names of these splendid characters are sounding down the corridors of time, calling upon us to follow in their footsteps by leading such lives as will reflect glory

upon ourselves and benefit on our kind. We may not be great as they, but we can be as upright and honorable.

"Character is created by the exercise of moral power, the will to do that which is right and avoid that which is wrong. A scoundrel may have a fine reputation, but only the good man can have a good character.

"Too often we are prone to think of character merely in the light of an asset for the world beyond the grave, but men, especially young men, should be impressed with the idea that character is temporal capital and a principal sure to yield better returns than any other. It is an investment which remains unaffected by panics and failures, and always brings dividends profitable alike for this life and for that which is to come.

"A good character is above titles and wealth, to be preferred before power and fame. The work of building it is the noblest labor on earth, but the foundations must be laid firm and strong in early life lest the edifice crumble in the after time. The future must be kept in view, and not alone the future of time but that which merges into eternity, for on the temporal life depends the eternal.

"To acquire the character which will stand him in good stead on all occasions and under his conscience a man must not flatter his conscience with silly sophistries which teach him that he is good enough and that nothing more is required of him. He must ever endeavor to be better than he is. Of course, he can never attain perfection, but he cannot remain stationary; he must either retrograde or advance. Advance, do your best to be a little higher to-day, a little stronger in character than you were yesterday, and to-morrow aim to be still further than you are to-day.

"We need strong men, men of impregnable character, against the bulwarks of which the surges of the world's temptations shall lash themselves in vain. Banish all deceit, subterfuge and double dealing from your life, act on the square, be on the level, realizing, in the words of Emerson, that a man of character is appointed by Almighty God to stand for a fact."

How true it is that our good deeds, our pure thoughts, our aspirations to grasp all that is true, noble and elevating in life, illuminate with an incomparable sublime

glow, or angelic light, the whole spiritual nature, preparing it for an exalted position in spirit life. Have you that divine **LUMINOSITY** in your soul to-day? If not, cultivate it as you would a choice flower, or otherwise go to spirit life in a darkened condition. Choose **NOW** the course you will pursue, one leading to light and love ineffable; its reverse carrying you on a tidal wave to the regions of darkness. Each one should get in tune with vibrations from the spheres of exalted souls, thus securing their active aid. You should learn now how to build your home in the spirit realms, and prepare it for your reception as a spirit.

THE LITTLE FLOWER GIRL HAS A VISION.

I.

Alas! how many human hearts in which the sunshine of joy, gladness and happiness never penetrates shedding an exhilarating influence that imparts a foretaste of heaven. The world to-day is in a transition state—just emerging from the dark and pestilential clouds of false religions. Here and there, like an oasis in the desert, you can discern one who is truly enlightened, and whose soul is expanded with generosity and goodness, from all of whose acts of life there is radiated an angelic influence that speaks of God and heaven. The abject barbarian can be found in all large cities; his brutish, savage nature is only held in abeyance by the strong and vigorous hand of the law. Left free to act, his low instinct would bloom with every element of the savage, and no crime would be too hideous for him to commit. Of course with such a state of affairs as now exists in every department of life, there must be a certain amount of misery in the world, and even that misery causes in some respects the latent emotions of humanity to well up in goodness, animating the finer feelings and bringing them to the surface like a flower on the overhanging branches of the tree; like

the golden wheat on the fragile straw; and like the little shoot from the heart of an acorn.

II.

We are not absolutely certain that a divine lesson can not be read from every incident or act of life. The little girl, who, on one occasion, quietly, timidly, and seemingly reluctantly, entered the hotel with a basket of flowers on her arm to solicit patronage from wealthy nabobs, was a brilliant spark from the workshop of God, although being reared in abject poverty. She seemed tired and careworn, and as she passed quietly along she noticed a vacant chair, got into it, leaned back wearily, and exhausted nature closed her eyes gently in sleep. Gazing upon her in that cold, bleak, dismal fall evening, one never saw a grander or more beautiful picture. The sweetness of her soul rendered her face divinely radiant, and the pencil brush of the artist could not picture more of the angel than was manifested in that solitary chair. Quietly raising her head, one present, actuated with kindly feelings, adjusted an overcoat that he had, under her drooping head, that she would experience no uneasiness while quietly sleeping. Then putting the basket in her lap, he placed a dollar bill there, and of each one who passed that way he solicited contributions, until he had collected \$10. While doing so he carefully watched the expression of her countenance, and at times it seemed illuminated with a light divine, as if the smile of an angel was benignly resting thereon, or as if baptized with a cheerful thought direct from God, or as if animated with the sight of a cheerful scene in dreamland.

While she was lying there he saw her raise her arms, and sweetly lisp, "Mamma!" and saw the motions of her lips as if kissing a phantom form, and then she was the picture of exquisite loveliness. Finally he awoke her, pointed to her treasure, and finding out where she lived, he ordered a carriage, jumped into it with her, and soon arrived at her dilapidated home. Her mother and father were dead; she was living with a poor, decrepit, heart-broken grandmother, who had seen better days, and who, as he noiselessly approached the door, was kneeling in prayer. It was couched in simple language, but full of

sympathy and love for her dear child whom she was compelled to send forth to peddle flowers, to aid in earning for each a crust of bread. When she ceased her plaintive supplication to God, a prayer as divinely inspired as any ever uttered, the strange visitor knocked at the door, and led in the little girl, who, with one jump, was in her grandmother's arms, and throwing her tiny arms around her neck and almost smothering her with her kisses and caresses, she said. "I saw mamma at the hotel; my dear, dear mamma; she kissed me, talked to me, and placed in my basket this money—all this money—every cent of it; my own dear mamma placed it in this basket and told me to bring it to you with this gentleman."

He then told the grandmother all the circumstances of the case; how the weary child fell asleep, and that he just to amuse himself at first, and then in deep sympathy, had collected for her this money; and that while engaged in this errand of mercy she seemed to be dreaming—at times reaching out her arms and lisping, "Mamma," and apparently kissing her. Concluding the narration, the old lady knelt in prayer, the little girl kneeling by her side, and then she calmly invoked God and the angels to bless those who had taken such an interest in her grandchild, and for a time their angelic visitor felt as if in God's own temple; as if angels were listening; as if the good and pure in spirit life were breathing the divine atmosphere of this lowly home, and flooding it with their benign influence. Rising from her knees she took his hand, and with tear-stained eyes bore it to her lips, and then bidding her good-by he left this home of sorrow, where there was one continued struggle to live.

III.

On this terrestrial sphere there is suffering, commotion and strife where least expected, and one-half of the world knows not how the other half lives; but by and by the curtain will be raised, dark places will be illuminated, the life of each one will become an open book, and then each noble-hearted person will consider it a sacred duty to know exactly how others live, that he may be able to alleviate their sorrows and afflictions. Until that time, struggles, strife and bitter contentions will exist, and

peace, quietness and good will only be manifested in isolated places like an oasis in an arid plain. He who doesn't care how others live; who doesn't feel interested in their welfare, and who doesn't try to enlighten those in darkness, is not, nor can be an honored guest of those in the higher spheres. You can only approach the pure and good in spirit life by assisting some one less fortunate than yourself, and by degrees trying to bring each one on to a higher plane of life. Without living such a life, you can never enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but must reside on the very lowest plane of spirit life; there is no other alternative. He who lives for self alone will gravitate to a plane in spirit life as devoid of beauty as his own soul. Study now how to build your home in the spirit realms, and prepare it for your reception as a spirit.

BENEFIT OF A RIGHT MENTAL CONCEPT.

Statisticians accurately measure the wealth of the mines and of the farms, and even of the seas and the air—billions upon billions! But there are no figures vast enough to express the value to mankind of so small and simple a thing as a **SMILE**.

It is a material world. We value as riches only the material things we can grasp and hold in our hands. And yet, the real treasures of life, that give to all these outward things their meaning, are of the heart.

Material riches? Why, but for so "intangible" a thing as sunlight, the whole material universe were black nothingness; but for "intangible" heat, not the smallest atom of earth could exist; but for "intangible" colors and fragrances, the fairest, sweetest flower were but a weed; but for the "intangible" light and warmth and fragrance

of a **SMILE** the most perfectly formed human face were only a lifeless cast.

It would be very interesting and highly instructive if one could compute the value of the part which the **SMILE** has played in the part of humanity. But, like the ray of sunshine that comes from the boundless heart of universal love, it is free—it costs nothing—and so can not be relatively valued. And, like the sunshine again, it gilds with glory all it falls upon, and so is limitless in value.

Impossible as is this computation, there are few of us who have not learned the lesson that it is a smile, not a frown, that makes things move in this world. If you don't know this, you have not begun real living. In view of this, and of the further fact that it is just as easy to **SMILE** and be cheerful as it is to be surly and disagreeable, it is surprising how stingy we are with our **SMILES** and kindly words. It is the meanest form of stinginess in the world, for the miser himself only loses by it.

In every department of the commercial and social world—everywhere—it is geniality that pays the biggest return for the least expenditure. Given anything like the same price and similar conditions, there is no business man who would not prefer to turn his business to a genial man. It is only by making concessions that the surly boor holds his own in the business world.

The **SMILE** is no less a necessity in the maintenance of the social and domestic harmonies. There is no place in society for the disagreeable man. Because of his connections he may be tolerated with some respect, but none seek him, and he knows not the comradeship that sweetens life.

So, too, in the home life it is the **SMILE** that makes things run evenly. The wife who greets her husband with a **SMILE** when he returns in the evening and who has a **SMILE** for him when he starts out in the morning is filling the home, however humble, with greater riches than gold can buy. And the little ones that are raised on smile and good cheer have a good heritage.

What the sunshine is to all material nature, quickening all life, giving to all beauty, color and fragrance, tinting even dead matter with glow of gold, and giving

true gold itself a higher glisten, so the **SMILE** is to human life, making sorrows and disappointments easier to bear and giving joys themselves a richer sweetness.

The above thoughts by Madeline Dean in regard to the intrinsic value of a smile, express a grand truth. There is something impressively beautiful in the one thought of the Ideal—its definition: **"A mental conception, regarded as a standard of perfection."** A genuine smile—a smile that has not a background of venom, sarcasm, hatred, selfishness, or uncharitableness, is the perfection of idealism. That a man can smile and yet "be a villain" is true. "A mental conception, regarded as a standard of perfection" is the **IDEAL** of a person, blossoming in the soul, as it were, and sending out high and holy aspirations, for a life in harmony therewith. If you have not in your own soul a "standard of perfection," then you are not making any progress spiritually; then your smile is never sweet, wholesome and attractive. When, however, one has a standard of perfection, which he has formulated, but which he in no wise lives up to, then he is a **HYPOCRITE**, and you can find such in every society.

"A mental conception regarded as a standard of perfection," may be a Christ, a Buddha, a Confucius, a Mohammed, or it may be an imaginary being, yet benignly beautiful and soul-satisfying, leading one to a higher plane of existence. Under such an influence many martyrs have been burned while their features were illuminated with a serene smile and joyous expression. The standard of perfection, if it has this foundation, **BEING GOOD AND DOING GOOD**, and that kind of a life is thoroughly carried out, any belief, however absurd it may be, will not wreck the soul.

BELIEF is not actual knowledge. The blind man believes much, but realizes very little.

A mental conception regarded as a standard of perfection, may be approximately what it claims to be—perfect—while the belief in regard to the Providence of God may be wildly absurd in all respects, yet such a person will grow spiritually, whatever club, cult or sect he may belong to.

✓ Each one should be judged by his mental concept of a standard of perfection, and not measured by any sort of religious belief.

It is absolutely true that no person can grow spiritually or expand in angelic graces unless he or she have the "right mental conception regarded as a standard of perfection." The right mental conception leads to a higher plane, while the wrong mental concept leads down to the lowest hell.

In the ranks of Spiritualism, in Methodism, in Presbyterianism, in Dowieism, and other religious sects, we found those with a high ideal standard of perfection, approximately correct and each one, regardless of any special beliefs, is advancing spiritually, is gradually stepping onto a higher plane.

There was Mary Ferguson, as the paper says, who, when at the age of 18, left her wealthy home in the South and drifted to Memphis to become a nurse. Badly disappointed in love, rejected at the last moment by one to whom she was engaged to be married, she changed most radically her ideal in life, her "**mental concept, regarded as a standard of perfection,**" and went to a school for nurses, and graduated therefrom with high honors, changing her ardent love for one individual, so that it embraced all humanity, especially those suffering from disease, poverty or misfortune. "Her mental concept, regarded as a standard of perfection," had been radically revolutionized, and she went wherever duty called, an Angel of Light and Love, her smile beautifully sweet, and tender, and her voice and touch vibrating with emotions that had healing properties. She seemed to carry with her the aroma of health, as she moved around in the sphere of usefulness to which she had consecrated her life. Her ideal in life was to be useful, **TO DO GOOD, TO BE GOOD**, and that ideal carried out in her daily walks had so spiritualized her whole nature, that she was a veritable Angel of Light.

One day at the headquarters where Mary was stopping there came an urgent call for a nurse, and she was assigned to the place—a stately mansion in the city, a home apparently of culture and refinement. Nearly twenty years she had passed as a professional nurse among

the wealthy as well as the poor, as she frequently worked without any compensation for her services. On this occasion, as she passed along the street she had tearful forebodings,—she could not restrain her tears for a time as she approached the palatial residence, but soon regained her self-possession. Admitted to the home, she was immediately summoned by the physician to the room of the patient suffering from typhoid fever. Mary was extremely beautiful, her person adorned with some jewels forced upon her during early life by her lover, and which she retained and wore as a memento of the time when her false “mental concept, regarded as a standard of perfection,” brought her so much sorrow. True, they seemed badly out of place in the sick room on a professional nurse, but they added to her beauty and grace of manners, and she said their brilliancy seemed to add to the sweetness of her smile in some of the dark places of life, and she, as some thought, stubbornly insisted on wearing them.

As she entered the room of the patient, a veritable Angel of Light, she detected something familiar about him, but did not seem in the least disturbed. She administered tenderly to his many wants, soothed him in his delirium, and there seemed to flow from her a healing influence that had a wonderful beneficent effect. The two worlds blended in an effort to restore the patient to health. In the darkened room at night the faithful nurse saw a spirit light rest upon him, and therein were outlines of a hand sending forth a vitalizing influence, that gradually restored the diseased organs to a more healthy condition. Realizing who the sick man was, all the energies of her soul were bent towards his recovery. When his mind wandered, he often spoke of Mary, his pet, his first love, and seemed to be with her, living with her in an ideal world. These illusions gradually wore off, perfect lucidity returned, and his health was gradually restored. Her last day in attendance, when all but the affectionate nurse were absent from the room, he sat up in the bed, and in tearful emotions, said he had recognized her, asked her forgiveness, and was freely and unconditionally forgiven, with advice that he cling to his wife and

children, and forget the tragic events connected with their youthful lives, and that he should work out for himself "a mental conception, regarded as a standard of perfection," that would embrace all humanity in its ample folds—**BEING GOOD AND DOING GOOD.** Thus ends a most remarkable case.

Man and woman grow to be like the "**MENTAL CONCEPT**" formed in the mind. You can not progress spiritually, you can not grow in angelic qualities, you can not possess in their purity the cardinal virtues, you cannot be admitted to the higher spheres with a wrong distorted **MENTAL CONCEPT** in the mind in regard to your duty in life. Commence now to construct a mental image of that which you would like to be, and if correct, you will get in tune with vibrations from the spheres of exalted souls, and secure their active aid.



THE CELESTIAL CITY, HOME OF ANGELS

This world seems to be the preparatory stage of existence; a stepping stone, as it were, to a higher, grander, and more complete sphere of life. Here the vision is very limited; the comprehension of things restricted within a certain well defined boundary, and mankind generally seem to move as if encompassed in complete darkness with reference to coming time. The future—an hour, day, week, year or century hence—is concealed from the view, and each one bases his prospects of the coming time entirely on the experiences of the past, and the ever living present. The weakness, shortsightedness, and finite nature of each individual show conclusively that not one of God's children can live wholly independent of the rest. Each one is a component part of God's magnificent family; you—who-

ever you are—are an important factor thereof. He who gazes at the moving, throbbing worlds of space, whose sun-lit eye, radiant expression of features and profound wisdom seemingly ally him to the exalted and pure of spirit-life, is no more precious in the sight of God, of angels, of the grand old sages in the higher realms of existence than the honest old beggar who solicits alms on the corner of some active thoroughfare of trade. He is more exalted now, with grander thoughts and more God-like purposes, and wielding a magnificent influence for good, he recognizes the sublime fact eventually each one of earth's children can be—and perhaps will be—his peer. Being truly great, he is truly good. Being profoundly wise, his mind penetrates the soul of things and reads therefrom a divine lesson.

II.

This man—Judge H.—we knew him well. He had reared a family of seven children, and now crowned with the golden fruitage of seventy-five years, his mind yearned for other souls to rear—to educate—to make comfortable, happy and useful. The incense of heaven seemed to pervade his very thoughts; his voice was silvery sweet, and his declining years as fruitful of good deeds as the autumn is of luscious fruits and golden leaves. Through his unselfishness he was prompted to make further investments in the Celestial City; he wanted to draw nearer to the angels—so near that he could see their smiling faces; hear their sweet whispers of love, and hold communion with them. He knew—you know—every one should know—that the only ascent to God's Celestial City is through the instrumentality of unselfish deeds, of pure, holy, exalted aspirations, and he fully realized that to remain idle, even in the golden autumn of an eventful career, was to retrograde.

What did he do?

Wishing to be good and do good, that aged veteran chose a method of work peculiarly his own; he went to the foundling's home, selected two little bright-eyed waifs—two sparks of Infinite Intelligence—two souls as much the emanation of God, as a Beecher's or a Talmage's, and he tenderly and lovingly took them to his country home.

It was spring time then; trees in blossoms, on each one of which was the wealth of a rainbow and nature's choicest incense. The grass was green, and bubbling springs murmured a fairy-like melody, and the singing birds burst forth with a freshness that indicated their knowledge that sombre winter had gone.

Judge H. with his precious charge approaches his rural home. The sun, just setting, sheds a mellow, tender radiance over trees, grass and lawn, and the azure sky smiles, apparently, a loving benediction upon him.

He had assumed the guardianship of two "illegitimate children!" In the sight of Judge H.—in the sight of God—in the sight of the angels—in the sight of the wise sages of spirit life,—there are no illegitimate children; they may be born outside of wedlock; they may be unwelcome human waifs; they may be deserted by their parents, yet they belong to the great human family.

III.

That night those two little adopted children were put tenderly to bed; they went to sleep under the heavenly influence of smiles and generous impulses, and awoke in the morning, refreshed, and ready and eager to enjoy the comforts of their new-found home.

Those two fragments of God's family had found a splendid school. They needed kindness—kind words are divine. They needed smiles—demons rarely smile. They needed kisses—kisses are the birthright of children. They were made joyous and happy under the genial influence of that Trinity—Kindness, Smiles and Love.

Here was one investment in the Celestial City, the final home of the whole human family. Gold and silver, precious stones and brilliant diamonds, do not pass current there. Bonds or gold cannot purchase the favor of angels. The poor, honest, toiling mechanic or common day laborer is nearer God—is nearer the angels—nearer the Celestial City, probably, than an Astor, a Gould or a Vanderbilt. You can't buy with earthly riches a lot in God's Home. There is no selfishness there, no aristocracy; no railroad magnates; nothing that is unclean. That home is gained by gradual growth and development, through the instrumentality of unselfish acts, noble aspirations and

philanthropic purposes. Have you made an investment in that City? Have you a foothold there? Have you an aspiration to become one of the noble sages and philanthropists who live there? Think! Stop and ponder well! What good, unselfish deed has crowned your life?

What kind act did you ever do that turned magic-like, into currency acceptable in the Celestial City?

What sorrowing heart have you comforted?

What cheerful word have you spoken that illuminated some despairing soul and dissipated the clouds of despair?

Have your aspirations been high and holy?

Pause! Let these questions, like Angels of Light, penetrate your soul, and observe the answer. If you can give no favorable response to these questions, then you have made no investment in the Celestial City, and you must in the future live in a locality just as barren of beauty, grandeur and loveliness as your own life is of good results or noble aspirations, or until you shall have accomplished in the spirit realms what you signally failed to do on earth.

Every act, word and deed must come forth kindly and lovingly. Selfish expounders of the Gospel, with large salaries for their teachings, exhortations, and explanations of Scripture, have no claim to, nor can they approach, the Celestial City until their feelings and purposes change. They preach; they pray; they exhort; they make professional calls, because they are paid for so doing. They must do good simply because they love to do it, whether paid therefor or not.

It is not necessary to belong to any church; to read any Bibles; to sing psalms or engage in loud prayers in order to prepare yourself for a cordial greeting in the home of the angels when you shall have passed the portal called death. **DO GOOD AND BE GOOD.** That is the only coin that God and angels use.

Even theatrical performers sometimes receive the smiles of angels. There was Sara Jewett. Her father was taken ill and was affectionately cared for by his daughter until his death. Among her father's papers Miss Jewett found a letter from his former creditor, saying that he was very badly in want of the \$50 that was due him. Although Miss Jewett was in no way responsible for the

debt, as her father left no property, she at once informed the creditor that she would pay the claim. The next day she took a carriage, and at much personal inconvenience and the loss of valuable time, she found her father's creditor and paid the debt. Curiously enough, on the same day the creditor received from the son of a distinguished clergyman, whom he had befriended with a loan, a curt refusal to acknowledge the debt, which he had ample means to defray from a legacy left him by his father. The domestic life of actresses would make an interesting book. Most of them are much like other women off the stage. The one who reports this incident says: "I have often wished that some of the clergymen who used to preach against the "Black Crook" could see Emily Rigl, one of the leading danseuses, in her cosy home. She has been a mother to her brother, whom she has educated and cared for all his life."

Ever remember that the Celestial City is your final objective point; that to gain it should be the aspiration of each one; that those whose lives are not characterized by noble deeds, will in accordance with nature's grand laws gravitate to a locality in spirit life that corresponds exactly with their own barren condition of soul. Commence, then, at once, to lead such a life, that will eventually secure you a home in the Celestial City. Make an investment therein to-day by doing a generous act, and thereby making some sad soul more joyous and happy.

THE FADED WIFE PASSES TO SPIRIT LIFE.

I.

"I am fading," says the dying wife to her husband. "I could have wished to live if only to be at your side when your time shall come and, pillowing your head upon my breast, wipe the death-damps from your brow, and usher your departing spirit into its Maker's presence, embalmed in woman's holiest prayer. But it is not to be, and I submit. Yours is the privilege of watching, through long and dreary nights, the spirit's final flight. And you shall share my last thought, and the last faint pressure of the hand, and the last feeble kiss shall be yours, and even when flesh and heart shall have failed me, my eyes shall rest on yours until glazed by death, and our spirits shall hold one last communion, until, gently fading from my view—the last of earth—you shall mingle with the first bright glimpses of the unfading glories of the better world, where partings are unknown. Well do I know the spot, my dear George, where you will lay me; often we stood by the place, and, as we watched the mellow sunset, as it glanced in quivering flashes through the leaves, and furnished the grassy mounds around us with stripes of burnished gold, each perhaps has thought that some day one of us would come alone, and whichever it might be, your name would be on the stone. But we loved the spot, and I know you will love it none the less when you see the same quiet sunlight linger and play among the grass that grows over your Mary's grave. I know you will go there, and my spirit will be with you then, and whisper among the waving branches, 'I am not lost, but gone before.'

She faded away from the arms of her husband—vanished like a tender flower in the embrace of the cutting frost. All are struggling against fading, growing coarse and haggard in appearance. As each year has its rippling spring-time, its fragrant flower-laden summer, its

fruitful autumn, and interesting winter, so if life were rounded out in full perfection, each one would have a happy, joyous spring-time, a golden fruitful autumn, be healthy and happy in the autumnal years of life, and peaceful and serene during the winter scenes that follow. But such is not always the case.

II.

We have seen during our career in life many faded objects, but the most forlorn, heart-broken, desolate creature, was a faded wife! We knew her well. In her youth she was the most brilliant, fascinating girl we ever met. As artless as a child, her features tinged with a delicate roseate hue, which, when illuminated with a smile, resembled the scintillations of rays of light in a sunset cloud! Her eyes seemed to laugh, and her countenance was all aglow with the spring-time sunshine of her soul! She was the fairest of the fair. She was grand in appearance without realizing it. Her young life, beaming with conscious innocence, sparkling like the spray of a fountain, and tender, compassionate, loving, she was esteemed by all. She finally married a wealthy man,— to the outward seemingly a happy union. Finally we lost sight of her for twenty years of our life, and then we raised the curtain on a different scene: She had become the mother of seven children. The oldest, a young lady of eighteen, was the very picture of her youthful mother, only more delicate—not the freshness that characterized her, yet so much like her that for a moment we thought we were talking with her again. We inquired for the mother. She was in an adjoining room reclining in an invalid's chair! She was surrounded by wealth, by luxury, by every external appliance that could render life happy. All of her children were there, and never did I see a more beautiful cluster! They excited our highest admiration and praise. But the mother had faded! She was no longer attractive or handsome! Her hair was snowy white, her voice sounded sepulchral; her step was weak and languid, and consumption had fastened its fangs upon her. Her husband had been led astray by an artful siren. When his wife began to fade, to grow prematurely old, his love, too,

vanished, and he sought companionship a large portion of the time away from home. His coldness chilled his wife, as the autumnal wind does the tender plant, and she went into a decline. Alas! poor, weak human nature! As we gazed on that poor woman, I felt the shadows of death approaching, and told her that she could not live long.

"But I must live," said she. "Those children demand a mother's love and affection. I will live! I must live for them!"

Poor woman, poor faded creature, how she struggled against fate! It was a sad, sad scene. Forsaken by her husband, so far as love could go, she still yearned to live that she might exercise guardian care over her offspring. A faded wife! Indeed faded,—vanished within her children! The eldest had her youthful, sparkling vivacity; in every link, in every unfolding bud of that family circle, was a part of herself! True, she had faded, but witness the beautiful scene! The grandeur of her soul beamed in her children. She had been true to God and nature!

"Poor, faded wife!" petulently murmured her husband.

Yes, she had faded; but as the sun fades from our sight, it continues to shine on other scenes, to animate other sections, and to bestow on vegetation its life-giving properties; so will that faded mother continue to live in and around her children. But gradually she failed—the emaciated form grew weaker, the voice more husky, the cough more violent, and her hope less strong, until finally prostrated helplessly on her bed, she realized she had not long to live.

The children had been told that death was approaching. Their mother was gradually dying. The young lady whom we so much admired in former years, was just passing down—to her—the bleak, desolate pathway of death. But the children tenderly loved that faded mother. The wealth of their youthful hearts was hers—only hers—and we saw them all kneel by the side of her dying bed!

It was a grand sight,—seven children in prayer! Seven hearts beating in unison! Seven souls woven in one chain of a mother's love!

They cried as if their hearts would break; their sobs

were heart-rending to hear; such a scene would seemingly melt a heart of steel, and bring tears to the eyes of a calloused wretch. That husband, who had deserted his faded wife, as he gazed upon the plaintive scene, the seven children on bended knees by the side of the bed, bent over the faded form, the arms were extended, and the dying mother whispered: "Promise me to guard, protect and care for our children."

"I surely will," he responded. "And will you, my darling wife, forgive me?" asked the repentant husband.

"Yes! Most assuredly I do!"

And those were the last words the dying wife uttered.

The next day the children, realizing that their mother had passed to spirit life, they gathered flowers from the garden, wove them into the words, "Your Children's Tribute of Love," and they were placed on the coffin a fitting expression of the bubbling emotions of their souls, and were carried to the grave with the remains.

III.

The ascended spirit is no longer a faded wife. Her advent into spirit life was transcendently grand and beautiful. Her heroic life-deeds had been woven into her spirit-home, and its environments, and she found that for every sacrifice she had ever made she was correspondingly rewarded! The radiance of youth had returned to her. In spirit life no one would regard her as faded!

You need not regret fading, or in the loss of beauty and strength, if the same is caused by benevolent, praiseworthy acts, or in heroic self-sacrifice for others. It pays to fade in the discharge of a sacred duty, in doing good and in alleviating the suffering of others.

When the mother fades away into her children—in devotion to them—losing health and vigor in maintaining and nourishing them, verily great shall be her reward!

Little waves of light come 95,000,000 of miles from the sun to vanish in a flower and impart a heaven-born fragrance for mortals to breathe. It pays to gradually fade away into humane acts and philanthropic deeds. Such a transmigration should be devoutly sought. Roger Williams' remains, it is said, nourished the roots of an

apple tree, fading away into beautiful blossoms and golden fruit! Let each one, then, so shape his life as to gradually fade away into something better, holier, purer, that he may see in the future his aspiration and deeds woven into a spiritual home, a fit residence for the unselfish soul, and an honor to the Home Circle Fraternity.

TWO IMPRESSIVE INCIDENTS IN LIFE.

Each one forced into this world of care and anxiety, and then forced through it, and then forced out of it, finally landing into the realm of souls—all a Forcing Process. All along this wonderfully impressive and thrilling line of life this Forcing Process continues with automatic regularity and precision, bringing ecstatic joy to some, and extreme sorrow to others. The Forcing Process never ceases its work. It is the twin brother of Time—on and on it goes, leaving in its train much joy and also innumerable pangs of distress. It traverses rivers of blood; it kills with fire, with flood, with bubonic plagues, with pestilence and famine, and with the terrific lightning's flash. This Forcing Process is regarded by some as an Angel of Darkness, for it works in the dark—no one knows of its secret wishes or designs. Yes, forced into the world, forced through it, and then forced into the spirit realms.

This Forcing Process is in every sense of the word an arbitrary dictator, holding the whole world in abject submission. Who can control it? Who can even influence it? Who ever thought of thwarting its designs? This Forcing Process is really a tyrant or a benefactor, thrusting you in the world, and then out of it, never resting in its work, for a single moment. Some it thrusts into the world blind; some it makes deaf and dumb; some it creates are deformed, some crippled, some badly dis-

eased, and many idiotic, and others extremely cruel and barbarous.

All through nature this Forcing Process exists. Sometimes it brings into the world an Edison, a Tesla, a Newton, a Fulton, whose wisdom blesses the world. Occasionally it brings forth a genius like Mozart, Beethoven, Liszt, or even a Blind Tom. It is cruelly erratic sometimes, yet occasionally bursts forth into a philosophical strain, bringing to earth a Newton, Darwin or Spencer. It is at times malevolent—even satanic or diabolical. It is also the greatest principle of the universe, charitable, kindly constructive and elevating. It contains the darkness of night and the meridian light of the noonday sun. It is a contradiction in its make-up, sublime harmony or discord as it plays on humanity.

Yes, this Forcing Process is a medley, a miracle, a blind force, an enigma, an unsolved problem, yet it brings intelligence, light and joy out of crude matter. We will illustrate:

A little babe, racked with pain, crying bitterly at times, its tear-stained sobs going out in one melancholy, despairing wail, was clasped to its mother's bosom, in one fond affectionate embrace, as she lisped words of affection, sweet incense of love stored up in her soul, with which she baptized her darling child—a baptism more poetical, more lovingly sweet and impressive, and far more beautiful and angelic, than the church baptism by water; but the child still cried—nothing seemed to quiet it. Then the little mite of a brother took the babe and tenderly laid it in its crib, and then commenced singing in German, a sweet lullaby song. As he bent over the child singing, his features became illuminated, as if an angel smile had been transferred to them, just as the artist transfers the grandeur of his thoughts and aspirations to canvas, and as he sang he stroked the child lovingly, and it became quiet, and seemed to be sleeping, and then rising from his stooping posture, he gave his voice full vent in repeating the lullaby song, which created a vibration so tenderly pathetic that the eyes of a score of mothers were riveted upon him, and there he stood transfigured, angelic, for ten minutes

singing German lullaby songs by the crib of the sleeping babe.

Alas! sweetly sleeping, as all thought, yet dead! And when Fritz and the mother realized the sorrowful fact, they burst in an agony of grief. Could their spirit eyes have been opened so they could see the child's spirit as it emerged from its body, and see it assigned to the care of a spirit mother, they would have rejoiced with joy unspeakable.

The various mothers present at the sanitarium on the lake shore in Chicago gathered around the crib, and mingled their tears and deep regrets with those of Fritz and the mother.

The Forcing Process had transfigured the child into a picture of loveliness, just as Nature transfigures the bud into a blossom, just as she transfigures the blossom into luscious fruit and delicious perfume, just as she transfigures the darkness of a gloomy night into the delightful glow and transcendent beauty of a summer morn, all aglow with the iridescent colors of the rainbow, and pleasant beyond description—all the direct result of a Forcing Process.

Another scene is recorded in the daily papers. In the dens of vice, a hideous hole where demons congregate, and sin emits a poisonous influence that pervades the room in dark, grim clouds, wherein degraded spirits regale themselves as they peer around with a ghastly smile on their faces, a Magdalen, with delicate traces of beauty still resting on her pallid features, like a sunbeam filtered through the dismal clouds of a dark miasmatic swamp, and a voice charmingly sweet, and a stately bearing, the legacy of unsullied innocence and refinement, is singing an amorous song, a charming voice used as a decoy to lead the lustful on in this dark pit of hellish despair to spend their money. She sang and sang, seeming never to tire, and the shouts of "bravo," "fine," "exhilarating," came from various parts of this dismal room in the back part of a saloon, from those present, as they quaffed the wine. All at once she ceased her amorous songs. The tears trickled down her features, emotions, tender and pathetic, surged through her soul as if

transplanted there by exalted beings, and with a wave of her hand, and her pallid features beaming with a radiance that seemed divine, silencing all present, she commenced singing as if under the influence of an angel. As reported by a college student present, who was on a tour of investigation of the dark side of life, it appeared as if the radiance and sublime beauty of one from the climes of Paradise had come to earth through her, the transformation seemed so complete. She sang a verse, and silence reigned. The wine glasses were lowered as they were being raised to the lips, and placed back on the table. The silence in this heart-rending den of vice was most profound; the poor wayward girls present seemed to become subdued, and calm, and thoughtful; their features relaxed, their clasp on the wine glass was released, and a solemn thoughtful mood took the place of ribald jests and obscene language, and the very air of the foul room seemed moved with a different vibration. With hands clasped, with eyes upturned as if in a trance, her voice tremulous with emotions, the singer gave expression to songs that must have had their birthplace in the higher spheres of spirit life, they were so tremulous with sympathy and exalted thoughts, as if some Angel of Light and Love had taken possession of her, had pierced the dark cloud of gloom that pervaded this den of vice, and the sudden transition was like the ushering in of the morning dawn after a dark and dismal night. As she sang the last verse this Magdalen, as reported, fell prostrate on the floor, as if paralyzed, and in the grasp of death. The debased crowd fled from the room, the police were summoned, and the poor unfortunate Magdalen was found to be—dead!—a sweet smile seeming to rest on her features, the result of the transfiguration she had undergone.

This Magdalen was not really bad by nature; she loathed the life she lived, but saw no means of escape. Behind her dark life were aspirations, emotions and sublime thoughts, and on her advent into the realm of souls, a new life opened up before her; the darkness of the past receded, while before her the pathway became more and more luminous, as she dedicated her work to the

redemption of earth-bound souls. She did not go to spirit life like the little babe, in a state of innocence, but had much to answer for.

Thus it is we are forced into the world, forced through it, and forced out of it, and as this Forcing Process goes on, seemingly an Angel at times, and then a Demon, you must bear in mind continually that while you are forced through life, you have the power to make yourself what you choose, and are responsible therefor. You are now acting as the architect of your future home. You are free to choose, free to act, and as you do now, that will determine the character of your future spirit life, regardless of the Forcing Process that pushes you along from the cradle to the grave. If you try, you can get in tune with exalted souls, and thus secure their tender care and aid.

NECESSITY FOR HIGH IDEALS IN LIFE,

There are millions who believe in Spirit Return. They are thoroughly convinced that they have had messages from their loved ones on the spirit side of life; but those **MILLIONS** who have from a scientific standpoint come to the conclusion that the door is open between the material and spiritual spheres of existence and that an interchange of messages can take place through the same, have never thought of attaching an "ISM" to the important fact they have discovered. They have accepted it just as they would accept any new discovery in the domain of science, and have no desire to be tagged in consequence with any kind of ism. However, there are many Spiritualists, highly cultured, who have formulated a religion in connection with their belief, for any one who has "**HIGH IDEALS**" has a religion according to our interpretation of the Century Dictionary, a standard work. And we pity extremely the one who has no "High Ideals"

in connection with his life on earth, and the multitudinous works attached thereto.

Under the circumstances, it is hardly fair for any one to condemn another in consequence of his religion, whatever may be the foundation on which it rests, providing, of course, there are **HIGH IDEALS** connected therewith.

No two are made alike; no two can think exactly alike. Nature in her various ramifications in the material and spiritual realms, never repeats itself, hence minor differences of opinion in regard to religion, God, Divine Providence, etc., have always existed and will continue to exist so long as time endures. Religion may have a thousand different superstructures on which to rest, and if **HIGH IDEALS** are connected therewith, the effect can not be otherwise than good.

Some seem to be frightened at the word religion, and regard it as an invention of Superstition and Ignorance, and **IN MANY CASES IT IS**, because there are no really true **HIGH IDEALS** connected therewith, thus becoming an instrument of oppression, as in the Catholic church.

The law which prevails in this country seems to be a party to aid religion, and when a belief is expressed in regard to the status of affairs in "Heaven" or the "Spirit Realms," then the word Religion to it seems applicable, and especially important—**THAT IS, IN THE EYES OF THE LAW**. Then why is it wise to ignore a belief in supernal things as a Religion, **HIGH IDEALS** being connected therewith. We certainly have no use for a religion founded on superstition and ignorance, yet if a church organization has High Ethical Ideals connected with it as in some of the liberal sects, then a good work can be accomplished.

Bishop Fallows has a religion, but it is not in harmony with Spiritualism, although it has exceptionally High Ideals, and from a humanitarian standpoint is doing a most excellent work.

The Century Dictionary speaks as follows of Religion:

"The healthful development and right life of the spiritual nature, as contrasted with that of the mere intellectual and social powers.

"Sense of obligation; conscientiousness; sense of duty."

Any Spiritualist, according to the Century Dictionary, who has a sense of obligation, conscientiousness, sense of duty, has **HIGH IDEALS**, hence a **RELIGION**.

Then why all this acrimony, this perturbed feeling, this antagonism, and harsh criticism against those Spiritualists who, actuated by a reverential feeling, form **HIGH IDEALS** in connection with spirit return, and who have a "sense of obligation, conscientiousness, and sense of duty." And who believe in "the healthful development and right life of the spiritual nature."

Henry F. Cope, in one of his masterly sermons, gives an impressive lesson for all to consider in the following:

"He who has fully followed his **IDEALS** may have missed all other prizes in that pursuit, yet he has found happiness and riches that could have become his in no other way. Here is the secret of satisfaction, here is high success in any life, that one shall have followed fully his ideals, shall have kept the best steadily before him.

"**HEAVENLY VISIONS COME TO ALL**. They may not come with the rushing of angels' wings, nor with strange and mysterious signs and appearances. Perhaps some of the old time visions of great missions and of heights of character are described in terms of the supernatural only because they seem so much above the plane of the normal, average experience.

"None is poorer than he who **HAS NEVER KNOWN HIGH ASPIRATION**, who has never lifted his eyes to see the glory set before him. After all, the measure of any life is the extent to which such visions of great possibilities and lofty tasks has entered into the being and dominated the deeds.

"There is nothing like this to make a man strong to endure, to make him despise the paltry prizes that seem so attractive to eyes blind to the greater glory. This is the food that angels envy, food that has sustained the soul through long days in the deserts, through weariness, toil, disappointments, fears, forsakings, losses, and loneliness. They are able to despise the cross and to endure the shame who have seen the glory set before every worthy life, and leading on every high path of service or of sacri-

fice. No man or woman ever attained anything without this; nothing is impossible to those who cherish this light and heed this call.

"Livingstone, Lincoln, Garibaldi, Florence Nightingale would have failed without the vision. In the rewards of wage or fame there would be no power to bear them up, on the contrary their daily experiences were enough to turn them from the chosen path, but for the lofty confidence that they were doing the one work for them, but for the inspiration of the ideal before them.

"And this is any man's religion, to follow his IDEAL, to seek to be the best that day by day he knows, to do the highest duty that any lofty desire indicates, to take the path that leads up in love, and service, and purity of living. The religious life is the life that moves up into its higher self, and so ever finds new heights before it.

"The great question for every man in religion is, not so much whether he will obey the ten commandments, not so much whether he will bend to the dictate of church or preacher, but whether he will be obedient to the inner vision, of the voice from heaven that speaks in his own heart and bids him forsake his dull ways of self-content and rise to higher living, to sacrificial service.

"That vision calls us to paths of pain, that vision, if you but heed and seek to obey, makes tremendous demands of you. It is not the easy, heedless following of an emotional, romantic love for glory; it is the thorny path of the cross, the way of burden bearing; it is so hard as to be heroic.

"The thing that is eating like a canker into our hearts, and robbing us of our power, and stealing our possibilities is our love of ease, our hatred of the things that are hard; we refuse to obey the heavenly vision because to do so would be to endure hardness, to forsake our soft and pleasant ways. So seeking ease we lose life.

"Our days are filled with a dull discontent, not because we do not possess the things of this life, but because we have missed its greatest prize, the joy of following growing IDEALS. There is nothing we need to cherish more, to guard more closely than this, the visions that stir to

greatness, the passion for perfection, the hope of high living and service."

Thus it is that every Spiritualist who has **HIGH IDEALS**, formulated according to the definition of the Century Dictionary, has a Religion in spite of himself, and each individual and the world at large should be made better thereby. It is the correct **IDEAL** formulated in the mind that enables one **TO GET IN TUNE WITH VIBRATIONS FROM THE SPHERES OF EXALTED SOULS, THUS SECURING THEIR ACTIVE AID.**

A SWEET AND BEAUTIFUL SOUL.

"The gentleman whose funeral we have just attended was a sweet and beautiful soul—but I have forgotten his name." So said Emerson, with the frankness of second childhood just after his friend, Longfellow, had been laid in the grave—Emerson, the poet's poet, great thinker and scholar, already enfeebled by age, his memory gone, and himself soon to follow to the land of the immortals. Very suggestive are the words. The name, which every lover of a pure literature hopes will be gratefully cherished while time endures, had already gone from his recollection, but the impression of the man's character remained—Emerson still remembered his "sweet and beautiful soul."

This eminent man, whose life was pure melody, whose soul was a garden of flowers, whose very thoughts were far more brilliant than earthly gems, and whose whole life was a poem of exquisite loveliness and sweetness, had then commenced dying—dying at the top, yet his very presence was as pleasing as the vanishing notes of one of Beethoven's symphonies. The world had ceased to be a Book to him, and he could no longer

read therefrom the practical lessons of life. He had attended a funeral where concentrated sorrow, solemn and tear-stained thoughts hover over each one like the dark mantle of a starless night, and the power to recognize the cast-off form of the peerless spirit vanished like a half-forgotten dream; he realized that "he was a sweet and beautiful soul;" and beyond that, his autumnal mind, brilliant with golden fruitage, pulsating with divine thoughts, radiant with God's own electrifying light, and rich with the exquisite verdure that can only spring forth in the soul of him that has had a foretaste of heaven, did not venture.

As Emerson attended that funeral, he too was dying—just as the golden sun dies when it disappears in the rainbow-tinted skies of the west, to burst forth again at the morning dawn; just as the acorn dies, only to appear in a majestic forest tree; just as the little rootlet perishes, to come forth in a queenly flower; just as the caterpillar vanishes, in order to assume the garb of a gaudy butterfly, and to dazzle the beholder with its brilliant colors; just as the blossom dies, to hang forth on luxuriant branches as a luscious peach—he was slowly undergoing the god-like metamorphosis from the mortal to the immortal, from the material to the spiritual, and gradually becoming unconscious of his surroundings. Then, when he attended Longfellow's funeral he was partly dead—oblivious to the fact that a near and dear friend was lying before him in the coffin, only realizing that he was in the presence of a "sweet and beautiful soul."

With Emerson the sweet and beautiful was ever present. In his own pristine thoughts the sweet and beautiful lingered like the mellow tenderness of an autumn day. In his own children the sweet and beautiful rippled like melody of the winds when kissing the orange or apple blossoms. In little children he saw the sweet and beautiful in the dimpled smiles; heard their divine qualities in their merry laugh, and felt their soul-inspiring nature in their gentle words and caresses. He lived in the sweet and beautiful, though his frame had become weak, his memory treacherous, and his eyes less sparkling. The

older he grew, the grander and more towering his spiritual nature became.

What a pleasant life this would be if all would establish a garden in their own souls, and cultivate therein all that is sweet and beautiful, discarding every little rootlet, every seed and every germ that could possibly produce acrimonious feelings, unkind thoughts, or wayward acts. We must not wait for the enjoyment that emanates from spiritual sources in the Summerland; we must have a congenial soil in our own nature, from which the grandest impulses of heaven itself will spring forth, naturally rendering our happiness complete.

Can you pass the poor cripple in the streets without sad emotions? Can you repel the poverty-stricken hand, appealing for assistance? Can you turn away the tear-stained orphan without granting a word of encouragement? If so, you have none of the sweet and beautiful in your nature that characterized the life of the immortal Emerson or Longfellow. The sweet and beautiful is only the heritage of the pure in heart, the benevolent, the kind, the forbearing, the merciful, the sympathetic.

He who has the sweet and beautiful in his nature has a foretaste of heaven; he can even catch a glimpse of the Celestial City, and he thinks at times that he hears the sweet whispers of angel visitants. You who have family jars; who have scolding, fault-finding words nesting like vipers on your tongue; who treat the humblest of God's children haughtily or cavalierly, your nature is like a Siberian plain—cold, heartless, desolate! The sweet and beautiful of human nature are merely fragments of heaven, finding lodgment in congenial soil. If sincerely invited, they come, and yield their angelic influence to all around.

When the time arrives on earth that the sweet and beautiful shall find congenial soil for fruitage in each human soul, then the golden morn of the millennium will be ushered in, and poverty, discord, wars and calamities of all kinds will have disappeared. To have a sweet and beautiful soul, you must not—you cannot—believe in the existence of a hell, where you think God punishes forever some poor, wayward child—one, indeed, of his own

children. Crippled, indeed, is that nature which believes such a hideous doctrine.

Heaven only comes to earth in the sweet and beautiful lives of the noblest of God's children. It never finds lodgment in angry expression or an unkind thought; a haughty curl of the lip knows nothing of its holy, benign influence. Within Longfellow's soul, all ablaze with poetical genius and adorned with divine love, was a fragment of heaven; not all of heaven, with its melody, its grandeur, its simplicity—only a fragment thereof, which was the sweet and beautiful that attracted the attention of Emerson. Heaven exists here in fragments. In some it scintillates as poetry, and the soul is tremulous with divine melody. In others, like Mozart and Beethoven, it gives expression to music, the essence of poetry, and unites the two worlds in the gentle bonds of harmony. In others, like Newton and Kepler, it promulgates a grand philosophy, and reveals the secrets of the starry realms. In others, like Florence Nightingale and Howard, it manifests itself in deeds of charity, and gives the unfortunates a foretaste of the celestial regions.

The fragments of heaven only find lodgment in genial soil. They never can be manifested in an unkind word, in a scornful look or by the garrulous tongue of gossip. In souls like Emerson's and Longfellow's fragments of heaven, sweet and beautiful, find a temple suitable for the expression of their divine fragrance. They, finding a congenial soil there, vibrate the chords of their souls, and poetry and philosophy flow therefrom as naturally as water from the rippling spring. If you kindly forgive your enemies; if you cheer the unfortunate; if you feed the hungry; if you return a kind answer to insulting words and constantly try to cheer some faltering soul, then you have a fragment of heaven nestling in your soul, keeping it warm and fruitful.

The little beggar girl, wan, pale-faced and tired, to whom a gentleman had given five cents, had her sympathies excited by a tramp—a hungry tramp, as she thought, and worse off than herself—and she gave him the nickel to get something to eat. She, poor, weary, faltering, half-starved waif, had a choice fragment of heaven in her soul

and it bore abundant fruitage, for she gave to another what she needed herself, thinking him, alas! worse off than she was. He however, had a fragment of hell in his perverse soul, spending that money at once for liquor.

Every fragment of heaven, besides being sweet and beautiful, is prolific in its fruit-bearing properties, enriching the whole nature, and laying the foundation of your Celestial Home. If you have no fragments of heaven in your nature, your home in spirit-life will be black, dreary, dismal and desolate. If you want heaven in the future you **MUST CULTIVATE IT IN YOUR SOUL HERE**, and give it free expression in all the acts of life. In spirit-life, when you first make your advent there, you will be greeted by just what you have cultivated here. If you cultivate perverse, haughty, domineering feelings on earth, you will scarcely find a fragment of heaven to greet you after death. Bear these thoughts in mind; ponder them well; learn a deep and significant lesson therefrom, and act accordingly. Cultivate the sweet and beautiful in your own home; in your very voice; in the words you utter to cheer some lonely heart, and in all your acts of life, and great shall be your reward in the Celestial Regions to which you will soon ascend. Try at all times to get in tune with vibrations from the sphere of exalted souls, thus securing their active aid.

THE THORNLESS CACTUS---THE LESSON.

While millions of men in every part of the world are continually striving in various ways to better humanity's condition, few of them are succeeding better than Luther Burbank, the California horticulturist.

Burbank's efforts are not towards improving sociology. He does not attempt to increase the efficiency of law. He leaves to others the task of making relations toward one another more kindly. He devotes himself to developing the crude fruits and grains of the earth, so that the task of obtaining sustenance may become easier, rightly thinking that if man can be enabled to devote less attention to satisfying the needs of the body he will have more time to give to the higher problems that confront him.

Just now Burbank is trying to produce a thornless Cactus. That seems a trifling thing, but when one stops to consider that, if he succeeds, he will have permitted millions of acres that are now valueless because of their aridity to become rich pasturage for all kinds of live stock, it is seen that the project is of the highest importance. In the west there are vast areas now uninhabitable, not because of a trying climate, but solely because water is not found there. The thorny cactus is abundant all over the region, of which it is virtually the only product. Concealed beneath its deadly thorns is abundant food and water, but its thorns make them impossible of attainment by animals.

If Burbank can denude the Cactus of its thorns, making the plant all food and drink, the improved product can be planted and will thrive all over the desert, which will then be stocked with millions of cattle, sheep, goats and hogs, for all kinds of stock relish the Cactus and fatten

on it quickly. Thus, by this one stroke, the food supply of the United States will be greatly added to, and prices will inevitably fall.

Burbank told the national irrigation congress that he believed success was certain, and that will be accepted by the country as a guaranty that the thornless Cactus will shortly be produced. If he had done nothing else this achievement should give him a high place among those men who have made life easier for humankind. And so much the Chicago Daily Journal says of the thornless Cactus.

Luther Burbank, of California, is a veritable Savior, a Savior in the highest, grandest and most beautiful conception of that impressive angelic word, for he is devoting his time and energies to bringing unto the world a thornless Cactus to bless all humanity, thus furnishing a new nourishing food for man and beast.

In order to be a first-class Savior, scintillating with divine qualities, it is far better not to go ranting about the world, indulging in abusive denunciations and vile diatribes, and accomplishing next to nothing in the way of benefiting unfortunate humanity.

Jesus exhibited an irritable, turbulent spirit when he cursed the fig tree and indulged in figurative talk which no one could understand. A first-class Savior, one imbued with an angelic spirit, must first save himself. Not like the Cactus, he has no thorns in his nature, but he has something perhaps decidedly worse, and more disfiguring and harmful. If he is deceitful, if he resorts to lies, if he backbites his neighbors, if he is jealous, envious, uncharitable, and in language is coarse and vulgar, his nature has got to be thoroughly reconstructed.

As the thorns of the Cactus must be removed to render it useful to humanity, and will be in the course of time, so must one who possesses those pernicious traits of character divest himself of the same before he can assume the position of a Savior. No one who possesses a bad habit in full force can attain the right angelic vibration whereby he can save others from its pernicious influence.

The one with deception in his nature, vibrates on a

low plane. A lie emanating from a person poisons the spiritual atmosphere around him. A vile habit is as injurious to the person as the thorns of the Cactus are to cattle, and before either can be useful to the world, those defects must be removed.

You may talk of weeds in the garden and in the fields—there are far worse weeds in human nature sometimes, and only by systematic exertion can they be removed. You cannot enter on a high plane of Spiritual life with unholy aspirations in your nature. The doors of the high and grand Spiritual spheres never open to envy, jealousy, or deception. Your habits in life cause you to grow spiritually, or to descend lower into the poisonous slime of depravity. There can be no standing still in any part of God's illimitable universe. As the Cactus must leave off its thorns before it can fill the role of a succulent vegetable for man and beast, so you must banish selfishness, lust, envy, jealousy, hatred, uncharitableness and unkindness, in word, deed or thought, in order to become a typical reformer or Savior.

In order to reach a higher Spiritual sphere than the one you now occupy, you must become measurably like the denizens of that sphere. You cannot carry a depraved appetite to that plane. You can not rise so long as base passions or appetites anchor you where you are. You can only raise that anchor in the degree that you abandon them.

The one who ravishes a young and innocent girl, using his own diabolical force to accomplish the object of his lustful desire, is anchored to the very lowest and darkest spheres of spirit life. The social libertine, one of the nabobs of earth, perhaps, who with wine and money and the blandishments of subtle devilishness, does not use physical force to accomplish his vile ends, yet he is as bad as the lustful colored fiend, who, blinded by ignorance, has lost all self-control in his satanic work.

It is not one's belief in things pertaining to the so-called Providences, Methods or Laws of God, and his terrible Hell or delightful Heaven, but it is the general tendency of one's life towards the good or the bad, regardless of all belief that elevates or degrades.

When Jane Helm, an exceptionally pious Salvation Army girl of New York City, believing in the existence of an endless hell of fire and brimstone, walked into the dark part of a den of vice, selling a religious paper, she saw sitting at one of the tables drinking wine with a male attendant, a young lady, neatly dressed, and with but little evidence in the expression of her face of the practice of licentiousness, and she bent over her and kindly whispered: "Your darling mother has been sent from Heaven by God himself, and now stands by you, her features wreathed in solemn sadness, angelic tears glistening in her eyes, while her voice is tremulously sweet and sympathetic as she talks to me deploring your conduct in life, and she desires me to save you."

Jane, the Salvation Army girl, was at times clairaudient, and like many other devoutly religious people, she believed that God had sent a special Messenger to her from time to time to aid her in her work. She pleaded with this young Mary Magdalen, giving her a brief but impressive message from the mother, telling her name in full and other strange particulars.

Mary then arose from the table, around which the Satanic devotees of sin and licentiousness had clustered like vermin in the dark hours of the night, and taking the arm of Jane they quietly left this place of hellish depravity, this place of sin, this dark underground deception room, where young and innocent girls were debauched and finally ruined.

Jane told her that God had, a week ago, informed her she would meet her in a den of vice, that He, the Holy One, reigning in heaven with Jesus and the archangels, said He would send the mother to intercede in behalf of her daughter, and he did. What a scene of sad transcendent beauty and loveliness in connection with the ribald, amorous love songs, the clash of wine glasses, obscene jokes, libidinous conversation and depraved thoughts, rendering the place spiritually dark and loathsome, and where the vermin of the lowest sphere seemed to congregate, and this when Jane was interceding, as she thought, under the direct intervention of God, to save one human soul.

Jane and this Mary Magdalen left this underground

sphere of satanic debauchery, arm in arm, and the former talked of God and his goodness, of Jesus and his love for sinners, of the archangels around the throne, of the boundless glory of heaven, and the shrieks of the sinner in a burning hell, while Mary listened attentively. She told her of her mother, as if she had known her all her life, and the poor misguided girl sobbed as if her heart would break, promising to go and sin no more.

Under the watchful and angelic surveillance of Jane Helm, the Salvation Army devotee, Mary Magdalen (as she was called at the time—that is not her real name) was redeemed and finally happily married.

A religion that inspires goodness, honesty, purity of character, and a desire to elevate all others to a higher plane, must necessarily be instrumental in doing good, if the creed behind it fully respects the rights of others. We had rather be Jane Helm, with her creed founded on superstition and ignorance, doing good in slums and dens of vice, than that Spiritualist, whose belief or creed is founded on the **ROCK OF TRUTH**, but who, in his entire life, had never in word, thought, or deed, attempted to redeem a human soul traveling the downward road to ruin.

Each one should get in tune with vibrations from the spheres of exalted souls, and thus secure their active aid; if Jane Helm could do it with a creed that has no basic foundation in **TRUTH**, how much easier it is for you, Spiritualists, to attain the same end with a belief that is correct in all respects.

HONESTY---THE REVERSED POSITIONS.

I.

Count Tolstoi's Parable.

"A charming, short parable entitled, 'Where love is, there God is also,' by Tolstoi, tells how a poor, little, old shoemaker, Martiun Avdyeitch, was started from the sleep, into which he had fallen when reading the gospel story of how Christ was neglected in the pharisee's house by a voice saying, 'Martiun! ah, Martiun! look to-morrow on the street. I am coming.' All next day he waits expectant and wondering for the advent of our Lord. He takes in a half-frozen dvornik and gives him tea; he clothes a shivering woman and her starving child, and he composes a quarrel between an apple woman and a street arab. So the day passed and the darkness came. The moment Avdyeitch opened the Testament he recollected his last night's dream, and as soon as he remembered it, it seemed as though he heard some one stepping behind him. Avdyeitch looked around and saw there in a dark corner, as though people were standing; he was at a loss to know who they were. And a voice whispered in his ear, 'Martiun! ah, Martiun! did you not recognize me?' 'Who?' uttered Avdyeitch. 'Me,' returned the voice. 'It is I.' And the dvornik stepped forth from the dark corner. He smiled, and like a little cloud, faded away and soon vanished. The starving woman and her child, the apple woman, and the boy also appeared, to fade away, 'It is I.' Avdyeitch's soul rejoiced; he put on his eye glasses and began to read the gospel where it happened to open, and he read: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me.' 'And Avdyeitch,' says Tolstoi, in concluding the tale, 'understood that his dream did not deceive him; that the Savior really called upon him that day, and he really received him.'"

II.

The above illustrates a grand and beautiful truth, whether an actual occurrence or not. There is one class of people on this earth who are non-producers—they are not really bad, nor are they really good. They sow not, nor do they reap. They are in many respects a nonentity. They have advanced far beyond the savage or cannibal; they will not steal from you, or treat you illegally; nor will they extend to you the hand of kindness when suffering from some deep bereavement. Many of them are scrupulously honest and just towards others, paying every cent they owe, and exacting from others their pound of flesh. They believe it is right to take the bed from under a poverty-stricken, dying woman to pay an honest debt.

Jim Alexander was a Western man, distinguished for his great wealth, his scrupulous honesty, and his wonderful business capacity. He would, however, pursue a debtor with all the venom that a wolf would follow a fawn. Honest towards others, he demanded like treatment in return.

III.

On a bed in a little vine-clad hut, an old woman was deathly sick. Her life was rapidly ebbing away, and the daylight of existence vanishing like the sun's rays as they retreat behind a portentous storm-cloud. Her features were pale and ghost-like, and expressions of sunshine and shade flitted over her features like so many phantoms across the embers of a dying fire. Yet on her face was that mellow tenderness and divine pathos that at times illuminate the soul of a poet who is vibrating with tender emotions from the spheres of light and love. Her voice had subsided into a mere whisper, and yet it was sublimely loving in its expression, as if intoned with the sweet influences of an angel right from highest spheres. In the lowly walks, with none of the accompaniments of wealth, there is often manifested that grandeur of soul that allies one to the high and pure of the spirit realms. There is often more of the angelic in the lowly walks of life than in the palatial residence. The great workers, the stalwart reformers, those saviors that came forth to usher in a new era, are all drawn from the lowly walks

of life. Within this sick woman there was a fragment of heaven bearing the impress, apparently, of divinity. Her thoughts, grandly beautiful, went forth as angels of light, to illuminate the spiritual atmosphere of earth, and gladden the hearts of others. While lying there she had a vision: The earth fades away, the darkness recedes, the troubles of her life vanish like the frost when bathed by the autumn sun, and she finds herself surrounded with angel visitants, who greet her with unbounded kindness and love. A husband comes and folds her in his arms; a darling child taken from her when resting in her arms, presses its sweet lips to hers and fondles her with childish love. There is a divine sweetness in the very air, and the flowers seem in her presence to grow in beauty and stateliness, and all things conspire to render her happy. But finally it was announced that she must go back to earth for a short time, to pass through a heart-rending experience. She did so reluctantly—almost resisting. As she neared her earthly home she lost consciousness for a moment only, and then she was in full possession of her physical body, and awakened as from a dream. Alas! where was she? She was lying on the floor of her room, without a vestige of bedding—her home completely stripped of everything in it. Alas! What had transpired? It was soon explained by a poverty-stricken neighbor, who brought a pallet of straw for her to lie upon, and an old blanket to cover her nakedness. During the time she had the pleasant vision, Jim Alexander had sent the constable to get her earthly possessions, as he had a mortgage thereon, and was entitled to them in the "eyes of the law." They were his by legal right! The debt was due, and the poor, dying woman could never pay it. Jim Alexander never took a cent wrongfully; he only exacted the pound of flesh to which he was entitled—so saith the law. But were not the angels thoughtful to take this old lady to the spirit side of life, that she might escape one hard-hearted scene, and catching a glimpse of heaven, she would pass away more tranquilly. She did not live long, as she gazed upon her home, now a complete wreck. The summons at last came for her spirit to leave its worn-out casket and ascend to a sphere

where there are no mortgages or land sharks, and where love reigns supreme.

IV.

But what of Jim Alexander? He thought evil of no one; he thought good only of self. He never in his whole life sent forth a high and holy aspiration. He would not think of stripping one of his earthly possessions without he had a mortgage thereon; nor would he exact a cent that did not legally belong to him. But his scrupulously exact honesty was the refinement of cruelty. His money wove a web of darkness around hundreds of happy homes. He sowed the seeds of misery, desolation and cruelty, wherever misfortune had crept. The unfortunate were his willing victims, who, once drawn into his avaricious tentacles, could not escape therefrom. His honesty was his shield, for he had kept within the domain of the law. If you, reader, have the exacting honesty of Jim Alexander, and follow his line of conduct, may God and the angels pity you. Such honesty as he possessed is never recorded in heaven, nor placed to the credit of any mortal. The earthly possessions of such a man may swell into the millions, and he may walk with stately tread, and be a favorite with those who worship mammon, yet spiritually he is a pauper.

V.

Finally it is recorded that Jim Alexander died! His funeral sermon was preached by a high-salaried minister of the gospel, and his body was encased in a costly coffin, and he was buried with all the pomp and splendor that wealth could command. The minister extolled his virtues, and spoke of his successful life, and the scene ended by placing the remains in the earth to be eaten by worms.

There was another scene hid from mortal eyes. The spirit of Jim Alexander attended his own funeral. The Angel of Light, with pitying eyes, stood near him to assist him in witnessing the last ordeal through which his earthly remains would pass before being consigned to their last resting-place. Divested of his earthly body and wealth, his exact status as a spirit was most truthfully shown. Poverty-stricken now, he presented a bad spectacle, and seemed the picture of despair and desolation.

But who was the Angel of Light that stood by him, and spoke kindly unto him? It was the poor old woman whom he had stripped of her earthly possessions, and left to die in abject poverty.

VI.

Thus it is that positions are changed when the spirit side of life is reached. Be careful I say, for exact honesty will never make you spiritually wealthy, unless supplemented with high and holy aspirations. The mortgage-shark, who lives for gain alone, and has no thought for the welfare of others, though scrupulously honest, will find that spiritually he is a pauper. The welfare of others should be uppermost in the mind of everyone all the time. Do not supplement your honesty with meanness, nor exercise your right to the extent of stripping a sick woman of her last bed. A legal right put into officers' hands may be a wrong and an outrage in the sight of heaven. Then we say to you, do not rely too much on your honesty to get you a high and exalted position on the spirit side of life, for it will avail you but little unless supplemented with charity, kindness, forbearance and brotherly love.

HOW TO USHER IN THE MILLENNIUM.

I.

Much has been said in reference to a millennial day when all wrongs will be righted; when the sunshine will be more genial, the flowers richer with incense, the fruit more luscious and nourishing, all things needful more responsive to the wishes of man, the golden sunset richer in colors, and the morning dawn sweeter with the smiles of nature and the songs of birds. Then each human being will become a savior—to save some one beneath his station in life from pain and anguish, always making an effort to elevate him or her by his own plane of happiness and comfort. But the millennium is not here yet with its golden stairs and its angelic scenes that lead to perennial happiness, where one can hold sweet communion with the brightest and wisest beings; as yet it is only a fairy-dream, with enchanted chambers where one's aspirations only have to be expressed to be realized and enjoyed—a happy delusion that for a time sends thrills of ecstatic pleasure through the soul, and presents scenes of oriental magnificence and luxury. With some the millennium is a golden stairway that leads out of misery into the glorious scenes of bliss; out of poverty into the gilded domain of wealth where every want is anticipated and supplied. It is the dream of all religions to experience sometime the enchanted millennium where all wrongs will be instantly righted and where pains will be turned to perennial joys of peace. Every individual expects to attain to the millennial state sometime on the spirit side of life, the home of angels, and of Gods, so called.

II.

Leaving the world as it is expected to be sometime in the golden fairy-like millennial future, where thoughts are supposed to be really things—the thought of a mansion producing one; the thought of a garden robed in

flowers of exquisite sweetness, bringing it right by your side; the thought of a fountain iridescent with all of nature's varied tints and colors, resulting in its standing out in bold relief before you; the thought of the warbling birds of the air with their songs baptized with the sweet dew of the morning bringing them before you with throats attuned to heaven's melody—leaving the world as it is expected to be in the millennial era, we draw in our fancy and step down on solid facts—the world as it is!

III.

While the millennium is not here with its bounteous blessings or benedictions, we still can begin to see its dawn in certain persons whose natures are mirrors which reflect the angel, the beauty of heaven and the grandeur of goodness, and the sweet peace and happiness that flows in rippling melody into the soul when toiling for others. They are mirrors which reflect sunshine from the smiles of love that proceed from the features of philanthropists on the spirit side of life. They are simply God-like. They labor incessantly for others; from the gardens of their souls go forth the sweet tendrils of affection that entwine themselves around the unfortunate and draw them up to a higher plane. Their very thoughts are rich in philanthropic plans that, as they go forth, blossom into fruition in many different ways. They are angels who, in the disguise of mortals, walk in the darkness and gloom of earth, and dissipate the same with the charming radiance of their features and the vibrations of their warm, wholesome natures. The millennial dawn is beautifully foreshadowed in them, and were it not for their presence on earth, it would soon become a charnel house. Usually they are not on the rostrum, nor in the higher walks of life, nor in fashionable, exclusive circles. They seem to live to reflect like a mirror the millennial dawn, to foreshadow the good time coming when the whole world will be linked together in bonds of fraternal love and good will. Are you such a mirror? Do you reflect in your life the millennial dawn?

IV.

There is nothing so beautiful, so angelic, or so God-like as a thoroughly good woman, whose love cords like sweet flower-laden vines, coil around in fond embrace every poor and unfortunate mortal, and draw them up higher, just as the sun's rays in the morning's golden dawn draw the dewdrops of the night up to sweeten the clouds before they send down their refreshing showers upon the earth. The thoroughly good woman is the advance courier of the millennial dawn and she in her works and deeds heralds the good time coming. The thoroughly good woman lives for others. Her life is a perennial source of good deeds and benedictions, as at one time related by a Chicago daily.

She devoted herself to the one blessed task of looking after the children brought to the police station on various charges, and, if possible, preventing their entrance upon a criminal career. Some idea of the number of little creatures that our laws seem deliberately framed to injure may be obtained when it is stated that she goes to but one station-house and concerns herself only with prisoners under 14 years of age, and yet her time is more than occupied. To be sure, she has chosen the station for her base of operation where the business of five precincts is conducted. Here she is on hand every morning at 9 to see if there is not some way of saving the trembling lad who has broken a window or pilfered fruit, from being thrown into the companionship of older and more hardened offenders. She makes herself answerable for his future good behavior, she goes to his home and impresses his mother with the importance of seeing to his steady attendance at school; she goes to his teacher and arranges for special oversight over that boy, including a report as to whether he does or does not appear regularly at all sessions. For almost invariably children brought before the police station are children who have been playing truant and have been urged on by bad advice from older boys.

V.

Thus it is that the really good woman reflects like a mirror the millennial dawn, and assists in advancing the

world to a higher plane. Every human soul should be a mirror to reflect nothing but good deeds, generous impulses and philanthropic acts. That alone is the divine object of its mission. The human soul that reflects anything else is distorted, has never gained its proper adjustment, and is not in touch with the angels, and is now on a low plane.

VI.

"What are you doing, my good fellow?" I inquired of one of earth's unfortunate creatures, as I saw him emerging from his room after a night's debauch. "I have been polishing myself, cleaning myself, shaving myself, and having a general housecleaning," he replied. "Hereafter I propose to reflect from the mirror of my soul, all that is clean, pure and noble; good-by darkness and evil; good morning the light of a day scintillating with new hopes and high resolves. Early this morning, just as I was recovering from the revelries of the previous night, my room seemed to become grandly illuminated, and there stood an angel sister, robed in white, with a smile of ineffable sweetness playing on her features, with its lights and shades, as if placed there by the brush of one of heaven's own artists. Entranced I gazed on the scene, while she in piteous tones pleaded with me, for my own dear mother's sake, to leave my wicked ways. Entwining her arms around my neck, she uttered a fervent prayer for my redemption, and exacted a solemn promise from me, that henceforth my soul should be as a mirror to reflect nothing but pure thoughts, good deeds, generous impulses, and kind acts to lead to the redemption of the unfortunate. I stand forth redeemed!"

VII.

Thus a human soul, steeped in debauchery, was reformed, resolving to reflect in a measure the millennial dawn when the whole world will stand forth redeemed. As the angel sister saved her erring brother, so should each one save somebody less fortunate, and so polish their natures that they will reflect nothing in their daily walks of life, but that which is pure and holy. Now is the

time to get in tune with vibrations from the spheres of exalted souls, thus securing their active aid, and aiding to usher in the Millennium dawn.

THE LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE.

The mass of mankind are moving along what we shall designate as the **LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE**. Those who are in our penitentiaries reach that dismal place of abode by moving along the line of least resistance. The Jail Bird who drifts into that insect-infected prison reached it through the line of least resistance. The poor misguided mortal who is working in the chain gang of a Southern convict camp, was assigned that disagreeable position, because he moved along the line of least resistance. The cruel monster, rotten with sin, who is hanged, owes his final punishment to working exclusively along the lines of least resistance. Rome, Greece and Egypt were swept from the earth because the great mass of their population moved along the line of least resistance. No one living speaks their languages—they are dead indeed!

It is just as dangerous and suicidal for a nation to move along the line of least resistance as it is for the individual. No one can achieve salvation along spiritual lines by traversing the line of least resistance. It generally leads to hell and destruction. The notorious Thaw of New York moved along the line of least resistance, and in consequence was overwhelmed with trouble.

It is far easier to win a hell, than it is to gain a heaven.

You can **DESCEND** easier than you can **ASCEND**.

The line of least resistance in the world of matter leads down; its contrariwise, onward and upward.

Selfishness and the base passions always travel along the line of least resistance.

You can step at once into the lowest hell, but thereto is the line of least resistance. The lowest hell can be reached almost at once. The highest heaven, to attain that will require an eternity almost. In Chicago, in its dark holes of iniquity and sin, you can see devils incarnate; but Angels of Light and Love, a century may elapse before you can work your way to them, and look upon them in their radiance. It is extremely easy to go down into the cesspools of wretchedness, crime and misery, and in the end, maybe, the one who travels in that direction, in the estimation of some wise spirits, will be blotted out of existence.

As a man you may move along the lines of least resistance and consort in a filthy den of vice with a lewd female, and carry home with you a taint or a poisonous disease that will be transmitted to future generations in severe pains and loathsome disfigurements. The darkness of sin never blurs or blinds the eyes; the brilliancy of the Angel of Light is too great even to be seen by the depraved. Oh! the line of least resistance is a dangerous one, and leads into fields of darkness, desolation and despair.

Falsehood, deception, impure thoughts, revengeful feelings, envy, jealousy, selfishness, uncharitableness, hatred, ribald amorous songs, licentiousness and the free play of the animal passions are **SIGN BOARDS** along the line of least resistance, leading into a pit of darkness, where no angelic light can enter. Those sign boards lead downward, never upwards. An angel can not enter some of the Pits of Darkness, nor can the demon enter the doors that lead to ineffable happiness and bliss. Traveling along the line of least resistance tends to the gradual obliteration of all those refined spiritual feelings, aspirations, and high ideals, until finally all are utterly extinguished, and, says a wise sage, the soul itself possibly may be dissipated, and consciousness lost forever, as set forth by that well known speaker and medium, Mrs. M. T. Longley.

There are always subtle charms, blandishments, attractions, amorous smiles, and enlivening beverages scattered all along the line of least resistance, to lead the unwary

astray. Look at yonder House of Sin, how loathsome to one who is on the ascending grade. How dismal and satanic the scene! One of the inmates has descended down to the lowest depths of wretchedness and depravity. Her spirit is tainted, her soul is tainted, her mind is tainted, her body is tainted. She reached her present condition very easily indeed by continually traversing the line of least resistance. Can she return to her virgin purity and loveliness as a sweet girl of seventeen? Yes, by an exceedingly slow and tedious process. You can roil the spring in one minute, and make the water unfit to drink. Several hours, or a whole day, may be required to clear it again. A single night of revelry, dissipation and carnal sin, while traversing the line of least resistance may disfigure one's self, so badly that many years may be required to remove the stain.

It was easy for Nero to burn Rome, but utterly impossible for him to rebuild it. It is easy to destroy, but most difficult to reinstate. When on the line of least resistance, there are certain carnal charms, libidinous pleasures and fascinating vibrations that render the spiritual nature dark and loathsome.

It was Julia Helen, as the daily papers said. She was found sick in a House of Sin and midnight revelry, and removed to the hospital. She had traveled along the line of least resistance since nineteen years of age—a beautiful girl, gifted in music and educated and reared with angelic care. She had given birth to an illegitimate child, under promise of marriage, and with the finger of scorn emitting a poisonous influence, pointed at her, she drifted away from home, came to Chicago, and in desperation joined the dark dismal ranks of the Magdalens. Yet during her whole career at times angelic feelings in her lacerated soul would assert themselves, and she would clasp her hands and gaze heavenward, and utter the childish prayer she had learned in her girlhood to repeat while her mother gazed upon her with that divine love which only a mother can express, and then think of some way of escape from the dreadful life she was living. On a cot in the hospital, as the disease drew closer to her vitals, the innocence of her girlhood, as beautiful and

fair as a poet's dream, seemed to scintillate in her nature, and a radiant influence appeared to center upon her, just as the rays of the morning sun caress the flowers which have been bathed in the sweet dewdrops, and she felt an exalted angelic influence, and why? Because she was not bad by nature, but that heaven-born quality had been badly darkened by traversing the line of least resistance, but finally commenced asserting itself. The mists of darkness seemed to grow less, and she asked the attentive nurse whence came the charming music she had heard? The nurse could hear none, and thought her delirious. In whispers she impressed upon the nurse she heard the music so divinely sweet, so touching, so angelically sympathetic and soothing. I am surprised," she whispered, "that you cannot hear it. I do. I cannot be deceived." And the nurse bending over her heard her faint whisper, "Who was that beautiful lady who was by my cot last night, her features all aglow with light and love, and she laid her hand upon my head, and said I was not bad by nature; that I was forced into the dark life by the scorn heaped upon me by former friends, and that from this time on, my progress out of dark conditions would be rapid?" And then her features became illuminated with a light divine, and her eyes were turned upward and she faintly whispered, "The darkness is receding; it is growing lighter; I see my mother," and then relaxing, she expired while the nurse with tears in her eyes was bending over her. Those who are not degenerates, who are not bad by nature, and who sometimes are forced as it were on to the line of least resistance, are often quick to reform, and quick to learn the right way.

A NEW VIEW OF HAPPINESS.

"The Owner of the Universe."

"Let us corner up the sunbeams
Lying all around our path;
Get a trust on wheat and roses;
Give the poor the thorns and chaff,
Let us find our chiefest pleasure
Hoarding bounties of to-day,
So the poor shall have scant measure
And two prices have to pay.

"Yes we'll reservoir the rivers,
And we'll levy on the lakes;
And we'll lay a trifling poll tax
On each poor man who partakes;
We'll brand his number on him
That he'll carry all his life;
We'll apprentice all his children,
Get a mortgage on his wife.

"We'll capture e'en the wind god,
And confine him in a cave;
And then, through our patent process,
We the atmosphere will save;
Thus we'll squeeze our little brother
When his lungs he tries to fill,
Put a meter on his wind-pipe
And present our little bill.

"We will syndicate the starlight,
And monopolize the moon!
Claim a royalty on rest days,
A proprietary noon;
For right of way through ocean's spray
We'll charge just what it's worth;
And drive our stakes around the lakes—
In fact, we'll own the earth."

Corners exist almost everywhere on this terrestrial sphere; corners in wheat, corn, pork, stocks and bonds. In fact, there is a corner on what is designated as happiness, and in order to fully enjoy a modicum of that blessing, which should be the birthright of all, constant exertion is necessary. There is even a corner on baptismal rites—only a minister of the gospel can administer them. A corner, too, in the confessional, for only a Catholic priest can officiate there. A corner in the atonement, it being confined entirely to the death of Jesus. A corner in heaven—only those can go there who pursue a certain religious route. A corner in purgatory, the Catholic priest being able, it is said, to send there any one whom he excommunicates! A corner in the blood of the Savior! A corner in the vicinity of the throne of God! A corner in the approving smiles of Divine Providence—the gospel teachers dealing exclusively with them! There are as many corners in religion as there are sects! There is a corner in hell—the Devil having supreme charge; in fact there is no end in corners established by those who are seeking happiness here and hereafter.

When the revivalist invites you to approach God in his way, it is solely for the purpose of getting you in a corner. When you partake of wine and bread as a part of the blood and body of Jesus, you are badly cornered. When you pray God for special blessings, it is only to establish a corner. Each church thinks it has a corner on God's blessings! The Devil is the exclusive ownership of the churches—they have a corner on him. Corners exist everywhere in this selfish, benighted world. No sooner does one write a book than he corners it with a copyright. The inventor corners his machine by patenting peculiarities in its construction, and thus keeping it from general use! See what a corner at one time on sewing machines, reapers and mowers! The happiness of this world, it is thought, can only be gained by cornering something, when in fact, true happiness can only be gained in that domain where there are no corners in religion, in finance, in mechanics, in land, in the air we breathe, and the food we eat.

All are yearning for happiness; each one has an estimate as to what constitutes happiness. Amber asks: "Happy? What does it mean to be happy, I wonder? Does it not all too often mean to be selfish? To take an active part in nobody's advancement but your own? To shut your ears to the cry of the needy, and to pass by on the other side when certain groans from the thicket proclaim that a wayfarer has come to grief, and is in need of bandages and balm? To be hard-hearted, indifferent to human sorrow, impervious to the awful demands of the abused and long-suffering brute creation? To wear your pocket buttoned tight over your heart, and to feather your own nest, whatever birds go bare? Does it not mean to wear fine clothes, forgetful that others crouch in rags, and to eat white bread and honey while others starve on treacle and tears? To sum it all up, according to the worldly idea of what constitutes a good time, are not the happy the light-hearted? A light heart has little depth; it is but a rill of shallow water, never a fathomless sea; a jig played on a banjo, never a diapason struck from the soul of a mighty organ. The happy ones, then, are the careless ones, the feather-headed ones, the thoughtless and the heartless ones. Nobody ever yet inherited a deep nature who did not also inherit the capacity for sorrow. Nobody ever yet was kind, and sympathetic, and true, but what he was oftener unhappy than happy. Nobody ever yet was loving who did not often go sorrowing, and nobody ever yet traveled this world with open eyes and unstopped ears but what those eyes shed many tears. If to be happy I must forego the joy that springs from self-sacrifice, and the reward that follows the effort to lift the vast burden of unmerited suffering that falls to the lot of the helpless and the voiceless, I would rather be unhappy. The world's standard of what constitutes happiness differs largely from the estimate placed upon it by the scattered handful of God's people who spend their lives in binding up wounds and comforting desolate hearts. For them to be happy, means as much more than the so-called happiness of the selfish and self-seeking as the

swell of the sea means more than the ripple of a reedy rill."

No one should make a corner on happiness; it is the birthright of each one of God's children. To corner it is to lose it. The girl whose happiness consists in her beauty, knows that it will soon vanish, leaving her like a withered branch in the fall time. **You can't make a corner on true happiness by money, nor purchase a ticket on the Golden Route to Paradise.** No one can be truly happy without at times being, to a certain degree, miserable. No one can approach the higher spheres, nor perfection, nor the grander attainments, nor place himself in unison with the higher influences, nor bask in the radiant sunshine of angelic love, without at times feeling sweeping over the soul those vibrations that come from lacerated hearts. Goodness never brought happiness from a worldly standpoint; but genuine goodness invariably brings a certain degree of misery. To be good, do good, to strive for the elevation of others, to sow seeds of kindness, charity, love and all the other cardinal virtues, can not, from the very nature of things, be productive of the world's view of happiness. The ordinary conception of happiness is ease of mind, a satisfied stomach; a cheerful mood; a calm, unruffled demeanor, a restful state, resulting from inactivity—self-satisfaction throughout! **In true happiness there is no worldly self-satisfaction, but a constant yearning for greater activity and a larger field in which to do good and be good.**

When on one occasion James Stillman came home from a distant journey after months of absence, he thought he had a corner on happiness. He was met by his amiable wife at the threshold, and her sweet lips pressed to his and her head pillowed on his shoulder, with tears glistening with love, she breathed upon him the incense of heaven! And then his children—caressing them, his happiness, from a worldly standpoint of view, was complete—he asked nothing more! Bed time came, and all on bended knees, the father offered up a fervent prayer to heaven for the numerous blessings bestowed upon him. Each night and morning there was religious devotion. And shortly an infectious disease entered that home.

The youngest died first, and the others followed in quick succession. On the evening of the burial of the last one of four children, Stillman kneeled in prayer, but he only said: **"O God, we thank thee."** Then he burst into tears. That prayer was never finished. **"Amen"** was never uttered! In fact, Stillman never prayed again! A new revelation had come to him. Before he had never known anything of the chemistry of sorrow! His soul was almost bursting with emotion, with deep distress and agony, and through the misty gloom a new happiness was revealed to him. He commenced reasoning from cause to effect. He had always served God faithfully, as he thought, and his prayers had been unanswered, and four little mounds in the graveyard concealed his darling loved ones. But a lesson was taught him. His happiness was rounded out in the quickening of his perception in regard to the assertion of Humboldt: **"The universe is governed by fixed laws."**

From the very nature of things selfish, worldly happiness is not commendable. Ease, contentment, self-satisfaction, and perennial cheerfulness are, in a certain sense, the enemies of progress—a species of mental and physical laziness. The flower in the backyard had a hard time before it burst into rainbow-tinted hues. Debris, old bottles, and pieces of glass interfered with its rootlet in forcing its way to the light of heaven. It required a struggle to reach a height where it could be caressed by the sunshine and be bathed by heaven's dew-drops. There is debris all around the struggling soul. Crime in churches, ministers of the gospel sinning; city councils selling their votes; juries bribed; judges sell their opinions, and everywhere offenses are rank. **The noble, aspiring soul can never be truly happy until the world shall have so changed that corruption has ceased to exist, and each one becomes a law unto himself.**

While poverty, sorrow, misery, pain, hunger and sickness exist among a large portion of God's children, each advanced human soul—each God-like soul—each soul pulsating with divine truths, will feel the effects of the same; a vibratory influence will sweep over one at times, and he will feel impelled to work for the elevation of

humanity, and to thank God that he is not happy in a worldly sense, for only the calloused soul, the hardened soul, the soul that enters into no reformatory work can be happy from a worldly standpoint. Bear in mind, then, that **TO DO GOOD AND BE GOOD**, bringing you closely in contact with a sorrowing and sinful world, while you do not increase your temporary happiness from a worldly, selfish standpoint, you are gradually advancing towards a plane of ineffable beauty and grandeur where that higher happiness will burst in on you in full fruition; and you will find that in losing the selfish, worldly, miserly happiness, you have gained those higher attainments—**THE CROWNING GLORY OF A LIFE WELL SPENT.**

To get in tune with the vibrations from the spheres of exalted souls you can not be worldly happy; for worldly happiness is always more or less selfish. It is not easy to be placed in touch with the Angels of Light and Love, for their vibrations are wholly devoid of selfishness in the broadest and most comprehensive sense of that term.

MALIGNITY RUINED MARY BALL.

I.

There is no condition of the mind that is more deplorable than that state commonly designated as malignity or unquenchable hatred. Milton says:

"I see thou art un placable, more deaf

To prayers than winds and seas; yet winds and seas
Are reconciled at length and sea to shore;

The anger, unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal tempests never to be calm."

That person who nurtures a cruel, relentless, malignant spirit, is clasping to his bosom a monster that will blacken

his spiritual nature, deaden his moral perceptions, hamper his intuitions, and effectually block the road of progress, and prevent the ingress of high and exalted thoughts into his soul.

“You do not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel,”

unless you first become a brutal monster, a man-beast, or a devil; in fact, until then you can not realize the awful condition of that person who manifests an unforgiving spirit, and who refuses to receive back into the family circle an erring daughter who plaintively pleads for forgiveness; who seeks with tear-stained eyes, and with a heart that is surging with emotions of genuine sorrow and repentance, to be again admitted to the home circle; who supplicates, implores,—yea, cries to have the portals of her parent's hearts opened again towards her, that she may once more feel the sunshine of their love, and by noble deeds atone for her misstep in life, but who meets with nothing but repulses; who sees pointing tauntingly and maliciously towards her the hydraheaded finger of scorn, instead of the beckoning arms of filial affection, and who finally, after doing all that a penitent child could do to soften her parents malignity, plunges into the dark abyss of despair—seeks relief from the horrors of her surroundings through suicide. She had said to her father:

“Thou shalt not force me from thee;
Use me reproachfully and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrong on wrongs,
On my poor head; I'll bear it with all patience,
Shall weary out the most unfriendly cruelty;
Lie at thy feet, and kiss them, though they spurn me,
Till wounded by my sufferings thou relent
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.”

The father would not relent. Look at the sleuth-hound pursuing the innocent fawn; gaze upon the boaconstrictor coiling around the victim of its greed; look at the venom of the cobra, and at the deadly sting of the centi-

pedes; gaze at all that is low, vile and devilish, and behold them all combined in one human being, a father who crushes with the coils of his hate the gentle spirit of his daughter.

As the tragic tale runs, which occurred many years ago, and which we select as one of the "purest" cases of malignity that ever existed. Mary Ball was enticed from her home by a commercial traveler. By a false marriage, he induced her to come to Chicago. After arriving here she learned that the marriage ceremony which she supposed to have been performed, was false. Poor, deluded child, heart-broken, she immediately returned home, but her father positively declined to receive her. Almost distracted the disheartened girl sought refuge at Wellsboro, Ohio, with some friends. Her father, not content to let his wayward child alone, maliciously followed her, drove her from there, and she was then compelled to seek an asylum in Pittsburg, and finally by the force of circumstances she was actually driven to a house of prostitution. Well educated, remarkably pretty, and with a soul that yearned for purity of life, her descent under the circumstances was really heart-rending.

The pathetic story of her difficulties with her father were written up in the Pittsburg papers and created at the time no little comment; but they did not bring a ray of sunshine to the heart of this despairing young girl; they gave her no hope—nothing on which she could clutch to keep from sinking. In all the darkness of her soul while struggling to once more stand an honored member of society, did she lose all regard for herself, nor the recollections of the days of innocence. Finally she gave way to despair! Her father's heart was closed against her like a granite rock; her mother, too, turned from her, and then she purchased a revolver.

Picture the agony of that young girl; see the dismal, sorrow-breeding clouds of her soul, as they shade her eyes, darken her features, and surge forth in her plaintive sighs, as tremulous as the emotions of pity that linger sweetly on the lips of an angel, who bends tenderly over the despairing victim of a father's heartless vengeance. Oh! how she regrets her wayward step, and how im-

patiently she watches the lingering moments on the dial plate of time, hoping the next one will come freighted with a message of love and forgiveness from the home of her childhood, so that she can step forward—**REDEEMED!** They come—each one—with only a wailing agony of despair for her poor, lacerated soul. Finally she claps the revolver desperately in her hands, and fires the fatal shot! Poor Mary Ball is no more on earth!

II.

The daughter, suffering acutely from the pangs of remorse, and her every emotion a wish to heaven for forgiveness, and her every thought prayer-crowned and rendered beautiful with aspirations that would be an honor to any of earth's children, it seems very strange that in this enlightened nineteenth century, her own father should repulse; yea, more, pursue her with unparalleled venom, and throw obstacles in the way of her reformation. He should, on the contrary, have awaited her penitential return, with an anxious heart and outstretched arms. When the Arctic survivors returned to New York, it is said that Lieutenant Danenbower, who had recognized his parents as soon as the vessels were near enough to distinguish faces and forms, waited for no gang plank, but simply swung himself to the bridge of the tug-boat, where he was met by his brother-in-law, Schenck. After embracing and kissing him, his first question was, "Where is Rae?" meaning his sister, Schenck's wife, but without waiting for a reply he bounded towards his mother, whose arms remained outstretched all the while to embrace him, and after two years' weary watching and waiting, the mother and son were united in tears of joy. They remained in this touching position for several minutes without exchanging a word, when the manly fellow embraced his father and brother, who were also weeping. Returning to his mother, he said, "Mother, let us go into the cabin; I have so much to say to you."

Here were anxious parents awaiting the return of a son from the Arctic regions, and they greeted him with tender tones of endearment. Should not the return of a wayward daughter, from a more dangerous and appalling journey than the exploration of Arctic seas, receive a like

tender and cordial greeting, while over her lacerated soul should be kindly placed the mantle of forgiveness?

III.

Mary Ball, once in spirit life, met at the threshold those who had seen her aspirations as they surged heavenward as brilliant as the smiles of an angel; who heard her heart-rending prayers; who saw her pathetic struggle to be forgiven by her parents, and her earnest effort to be good and do good, and who gave her a cordial reception to a sphere where all her desires to advance will receive hearty approval and recognition. Verily, verily, though a woman of the town, Mary Ball was nearer God, nearer the angels, nearer those wise sages who can survey the nature of each one, than her parents who repulsed her when she tenderly sought their forgiveness. Nurse malignity, nurse hate, nurse envy, nurse covetousness, and nurse an unforgiving selfish spirit, and you can no more enter the spheres of light than a demon can. They are the currency of Hell. **TO DO GOOD** and **BE GOOD** is the currency of Heaven. Choose this day between the two.

WON FROM THE DEPTHS.

General Booth Greeted by 1,000 Ex-Drunkards.

London, England.—One thousand ex-drunkards, preaching on how they were "won from the depths," was the feature of a great Salvation Army festival at the Crystal Palace. The occasion was the forty-third anniversary of the foundation of the Army, and the return of General William Booth from his fifth automobile preaching tour through Great Britain. General Booth, who is seventy-nine years old, continues to astonish the world with his wonderful energy. He has started on another automobile tour, this time in South Africa, and early in 1909 he will

be motoring on the Continent in continuation of his campaign.

"Won from the Depths!" There is a wonderfully impressive significance to that expression. It has a tremulous sympathetic vibration that touches the soul like the plaintive expiring tones of an Alpine horn, warning travelers of an approaching storm. There is tender pathos and a divine pulsation in the word "redeemed"—"Won from the depths"—coming out of the extreme darkness and desolation of degradation and sin into the light of a soul illuminated by General William Booth, who in his God-like work of redeeming the fallen, the outcast, the one steeped in sin, exhibits a nature that in some respects at least is vibrating on a high plane. However false a creed may be, it having no basic foundation in truth, if it is tolerant of the rights of others and has the right ethical foundation in all respects, and devotes itself to redeeming those in the slums, those tainted with sin, and dwarfed spiritually and intellectually, it certainly can be instrumental in doing a grand work.

General Booth devotes his attention to unfortunate mortals like the following, as related in the Chicago Daily News, when on one occasion, bowed down with the weight of a confessed life of dissipation in the dark and hideous slums of Chicago, where vice and misery had eliminated every mark of past refinement, spirituality, and culture, Mrs. Rhody Wagner, 60 years old, whose aggregated sentences served in the Bridewell amount to 19 years, stood before Municipal Judge Gemmill at the Harrison street court and asked to be sent there again for a long period. She told her story in a hoarse voice, tainted with depraved vibration, confessed to her past life, and said she was friendless and homeless and without any means of support.

"Send me there again, your honor," said the woman. "I haven't any home nor a friend to go to. I am a wreck from whisky. Once I was recognized by the world, but that was so long ago it seems like another life. I haven't any hope. Give me a year out there."

When the judge inquired into her past she related in a broken voice how she came to Chicago over thirty years

ago from England after she had become involved in a family quarrel. She was then a teacher of music and elocution. She drifted about Chicago, failing to find a legitimate business, and was drawn into the maelstrom of the great human undercurrent and gradually became a social outcast. For over twenty-five years Mrs. Wagner has been known to the police and her name is found in many places in the arrest book.

With such a depraved class, there seems to be but little hope, yet to them General William Booth devotes his attention, and he redeems many.

A religious belief, even if founded on the stable bed-rock of ever enduring truth, is but of extremely little good to the world, unless it bears fruitage in philanthropic work, in some one or more of its multifarious forms. Of what value is the cherry tree if it produce no cherries? The apple tree, if it cease to be productive; the peach tree, if it bring forth no blossoms, no luscious fruit, and a hundred other things, if they cease to be fruitful. Practical reformatory, educational and philanthropic work that will bear fruit, tending to elevate and refine the human soul, is what the world needs now. Is Spiritualism all that can be desired in that respect, with its soul-inspiring truths, and 10,000,000 of converts? Where in its entire ranks is there one who, like General Booth, has "won from the depths," 1,000 depraved souls? Who among that 10,000,000 has planned a philanthropic work, like the Chicago Tribune, at its hospitals at Algonquin? Just consider one single day's report from there last summer—healthy, romping girls and boys from the City's unwholesome streets, where no really natural pleasures exist, make merry, with fishing, swimming, building bonfires, driving, playing games, and all the unaccustomed joys of the country. Tiny, emaciated bits of babies, starved and diseased by the food and air of the tenements, fight for life under the tender care of nurses. Wan, weak mothers, exhausted by toil and poverty or recovering from severe operations, sit under the trees, motionless, for hours, absorbing the country air and sunshine and passively enjoying in every fiber the long awaited rest. And they are all patients of this unusual hospital.

The frail woman with the hands hard and calloused by labor, with no disease but utter exhaustion and despair, the baby with no disease but lack of food, the boys and girls with no disease but lack of boyhood and girlhood, are all patients, they are all undergoing treatment for their particular ailments.

The girls are being treated when they dance around the bonfires at night and sing. All medicine does not come in bottles or boxes is the motto of The Tribune hospital.

One night there was an especially gorgeous bonfire for the benefit of the forty-four new patients, depressed with sorrow and misfortune, who arrived, seeking health, comfort and relaxation from the constant strain of poverty, in gaining enough to keep body and soul together. A whole tree was chopped down and burned to make an Algonquin holiday. Fish were fried and there was an unusually brilliant and entertaining program of impromptu songs, recitations, and dances.

In the Algonquin hospital we have in a limited degree an illustration of the Angelic Spirit. However much it may be tainted with a creed, or with the odor of orthodoxy, or superstition, or wrong views as to the future life, its fruitage is apparent, is real, is wholesome, and soul-cheering.

One weary mother, Mrs. Kate Sullivan, came from there with her features wreathed with a smile of satisfaction, although she realized that she was gradually dying. Tuberculosis, the dread disease, had taken possession of her frame, which had been weakened by dire poverty, anxiety, and one unrelenting struggle for a mere existence. To her the country was charming; every flower seemed to her to have a soul; the singing of the birds was to her an angel choir, and the gardens and fruitage dripping with dew, seemed to have been caused by the sweet breath of invisible messengers of love and charity, and the atmosphere accompanying the rising and setting of the sun tinged with rainbow tinted hues, seemed to her like a baptism from God himself. The voices of the boys and girls as they raced over the green grass, or played some frolicsome game, or gave their hearty cheers for the Algonquin Charity Home, were far sweeter to her

than the music in a white sepulchred church produced by organ and choir—"Nearer, My God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee." Every little incident at Algonquin to her seemed to be one note in an anthem that had been baptized with the soul-inspiring influence of a Mozart or Beethoven, and as the vibration in an undertone trilled through the grass, the trees, shrubbery, the water and the very rocks, an echo came back that caused emotions to spring up in her soul, emotions that seemingly transplanted from a watching angel's heart to her own, made her feel as if she was looking through the very windows of heaven, and for a time she was exquisitely happy, for she was oblivious to self, to the hectic flush, the terrible cough, the weak condition of her limbs, and her desolate condition; she had forgotten them all as she lay on a cot, seemingly in a trance, her feature aglow with a divine light, the resultant radiation of angelic thoughts that were surging in her soul, for she in her extreme poverty and loneliness, was on a far higher spiritual plane than those around her. A visit to Algonquin even as an object of charity, had made her feel more kindly towards all humanity, and she returned to Chicago and her desolate room—to die. A kindly elderly gentleman had given her \$25, and thanking him profusely, she told him that amount would see her through till the end—and it did. As if anticipating the end that very night, as she had dreamed she would, she dressed herself as neatly as possible, lay down on her bed, went to sleep and awakened in spirit life. There on the morrow she was found with a copy of the following poems clutched in her hand, indicating she had been reading them before retiring to rest:

What the Angels Say.

Wings of truth are wafting o'er us—

Wings of truth from realms above;

Angel voices whisper to us

Potent words of light and love.

Those we've loved are watching o'er us—

Those we thought were far removed:

Angel teachers come to tell us
How our lives may be improved.

Lines of character expansion—
Lines that point us to ideals—
Are inspired for our instruction
By the friends from psychic fields.

Safes of gold they term but paltry;
Safes of deeds and script the same:
There is nothing rich and lofty
In the wealth which men proclaim.

Honest minds they say are better;
Truthful tongues and upright ways:
And the man who plays the brother
Worthy is of sweetest lays.

"Our Immortal Hope."

Mother, whose voice long since stilled,
Whose memory like the fragrant flowers of spring
Hovers around the heart and home to-night,
And haunts the silence of these evening hours.
Brother, loved above all my earthly friends,
Thy vacant place as yet unfilled, a void
In heart and home; the thought of thee
Causes the waves of sorrow to be stilled.

Beside your graves to-day I knelt in prayer,
Life's sadness filled my heart and dimmed mine eyes.
But from that grave thy voice will ever seem
In words of courage and of hope to rise.
Sad memories of the past, I lay them by,
A happier day, I trust, is dawning now,
From dust and ashes of the past
Spring verdant flowers to crown my brow.

Hope springs anew, the corn of wheat
That perished in the soil of pain,
Springs with a harvest rich and free,
To life, and light, and hope again.

They are not there, their bodies lie
Mouldering beneath the common soil.
We love to think of them as free
From sin, from sorrow, and from toil.

Somewhere in God's great universe
They rise a fuller life to live,
We follow on to know the joys
Which clearer light alone can give.
I left the acre of the dead,
I trod again the dusty road,
I saw the sea of human life
Struggling beneath its common load.

I felt again the pulsing thrill,
I almost seemed to hear the cry
By human lips sent up from earth
To those fair altitudes on high.
In sordid ashes, common dust,
Life's trivial round and weary lot,
God hides his seeds of holy corn,
And not one grain is e'er forgot.

From those dark heaps of sinful dust
Our God a harvest rich shall raise,
And lips that curse, or know Him not,
In far-off years shall sing His praise.
As sinks the evening sun to-night
To rise upon another land,
As autumn's fading leaves rebloom,
And flowers spring forth at His command.

So think ye, will He give consent,
For threescore years of earthly woe,
A human soul throughout all time
Eternal punishment to know?
Ever He works, by day and night,
Unresting, merciful, untired,
Justice is but His mercy's plan,
The grindstone by the steel required.

Thou great refining fire of Love,
All in Thy time shalt bow to Thee,
Men know Thee not, nor feel Thy power
Drawing the nations unto Thee.
Great Spirit, help me so to live,
That I may aid the glorious dawn
That breaks upon immortal hope,
When all the worlds shall be Thine own!

It is absolutely true that a sect with a hell of fire and brimstone, and with a mythical God and Devil in their code of doctrine, may be instrumental in diffusing more genuine happiness among mortals than a tight-fisted, penurious Liberal over yonder who with a creed that bears the insignia of truth and the impress of angels, is always looking for a test, but never looks for one whose earthly burden he can lighten—by far, we had rather be General Booth, with his false creed and superstitious notions, who “won from the depths” 1,000 drunkards, than one with a creed absolutely true, but who never redeemed a human soul from the bondage of bad habits or extreme poverty.

I again repeat that whatever your creed may be, if you have the right ethical foundation, if you are tolerant of the rights of others, if you are kind, charitable, forbearing, and work for the betterment of all humanity, irrespective of a code of belief, you are then getting in tune with vibrations from the sphere of exalted souls, and will certainly receive their active aid.

THE WHITE PLAGUE, VARIOUS KINDS.

The great modern wars are fights for humanity. The old style war brought sorrow, and evil, and death. It was often fought for the interests of an individual or a dynasty. The warfare of to-day is carried on for the good of the millions. Its success will mean happiness, prosperity, and life.

The boldness with which men of science are attacking disease is no more notable than the faith they seem to have in ultimate triumph. The international gathering at Washington in the fourth week of September, 1908, was far more important in its world aspects than a peace congress at London or an arbitration meeting at The Hague.

The common enemy of the nations is the **WHITE PLAGUE**. It is being studied by the ablest of the world's investigators. Already they feel the exultation of victory. The program of topics for the congress reveals the lines of battle and tells its story of encouragement. The **WHITE PLAGUE** must go.

After all, the struggle with tuberculosis is but one of the many movements for humanity which manifest themselves on every side. It is the distinguishing characteristic of the twentieth century. The old policy of helplessness and despair has been abandoned. Everywhere there is hopefulness and cheer. There may be discouragements and delays. But few doubt the eventual triumph of science over the ills from which mankind has suffered through ignorance or carelessness for ages. So much says the Chicago Tribune.

The White Plague is the demon of diseases in this twentieth century, and against which scientists and eminent physicians have struggled in vain to suppress. Its attacks are subtle in getting possession of the vitals, and then like a cruel, heartless monster, it holds on like a viper. Its fiendish attack, like a withering, blasting simoon of the desert, seeks the most vulnerable part of the system, and therein securely lodged, like an insatiate fiend, it gnaws the very life cords, which quiver in intense agony, like the dying fawn stabbed to its innermost parts by a cruel hunter, and the tears rolling down its more than half-human face, come forth pleading for its life as tenderly as ever an angel whispered to poor suffering mortals, pleading for their relief from sin and misery.

Against this White Plague prayers have less weight and influence in the economy of the universe than a dew-drop has that seemingly thrilled with intense joy in its bed woven by a flower, flies heavenward in the sweet

morning dawn on a ray of light, perhaps wondering why that pure white ray has nestled within its seven scintillating colors that, like fairies, build up in the summer shower a magnificent rainbow athwart the sky.

All the Gods in the universe—real or imaginary—have had suffering mortals bowed in sorrow before them, pleading with an earnestness that only quivering, torn, deeply lacerated hearts can express in the hour of bereavement, when life itself is gradually vanishing in one long drawn sigh of distress, yet their prayers echoed back to them, No help! No help!!

Alas! the White Plague has triumphed, is now triumphing, and will continue to triumph for a time against all the Gods, against all the prayers that spring forth like sweet tendrils from the souls of puny mortals, and against all the efforts of medical scientists with their serums and toxins—nothing can yet check its ravages—a White Plague, yet inwardly a Demon of Darkness and Despair, it is not yet ready to release its grasp of the quivering flesh of suffering mortals, though we believe it will be compelled to yield to science at no distant day.

But the White Plague is kaleidoscopic in its character, and not confined to tuberculosis, commonly known as consumption. It is the synonym of cruelty, agony, despair! Yonder House of Sin where young girls, not out of their teens, and ruined and sent hellward, is another kind of White Plague vibrating with Satanic smiles, and a laugh that is sepulchral in its tone, and songs that thrill with an amorous vibration, and emits a poison worse than that possessed by the cobra, and which finally sends its victims into darkness of despair.

Every large city has this kind of White Plague, where coarse groans of deep anguish and despair are as natural a product as is yonder garden of flowers, only the former is Satanic and the latter angelic; for every one is natural from the lowest viper up to the highest angel; they are both products of natural law working in diverse directions.

The breeze that brings contagion and death is as natural as the breeze that comes bearing the scent of orange blos-

soms and flowers on its bosom, and imparting health-giving properties to all.

The lightning's flash that kills an innocent young girl playing on the green, works in accordance with natural law just as much as the tree does when developing buds, leaves, blossoms and luscious fruit. The contrariwise action of nature in evolving prominent contradictions in the universe, has been a puzzle to philosophers all along the ages, and will continue to be for all time to come.

A little over fifty years ago I was domiciled in a log cabin near the Platte River, in Missouri, several miles above a small town then known as Parkville, situated about five miles above Kansas City. At that time I was a country teacher, with education barely sufficient to teach a common country school. There was a family in the neighborhood by the name of James Bisbee. The father was illiterate, yet blessed with an unusual amount of common sense. The mother was an unusually intelligent lady, and the two boys educated solely by her were very bright. Mrs. Bisbee had what the doctors then called the consumption, but now known as the White Plague. Thin in flesh, her body frail, the hectic flush on her cheek, and her terrible cough were harbingers of a gradual approaching death. Even when thus afflicted she was a veritable angel, so patient, so self-reliant, so cheerful, shedding a divine radiance around her, and calmly awaiting the end, while the family clung to her with a tenderness that was sublime, an undertone of pathos pervading the very words the boys and father spoke to her, so lovely, so endearing, so vibrating with affection, so cheerful in sadness, that even there in the home circle one had a foretaste of heaven.

Mrs. Bisbee, gradually dying, her life slowly vanishing like the autumn leaves and flowers, or like the trill of some songster of the air in the morning dawn, was truly angelic. She belonged to no church, yet she had in her home morning and evening prayers, the sweet incense of a soul bubbling over with qualities that would be an ornament in the nature of an angel. As a guest at the home we often heard them, so pathetic, so full of tears, so vibrant with emotions of divine love, the words fell

upon us like ■ baptismal shower. We never heard her in prayer that our eyes were not moistened with tears. She would not at once rise from her knees when she concluded her prayers, but would say, "Listen! I hear a heavenly choir singing anthems of praise. The music vibrates in my soul with with such divine sweetness that I feel a spiritual exaltation, and seem to be in heaven itself. I seem to be reposing in a downy bed of pulsating vibrations and musical emotions, and for a time I seem to live in a fairy land."

I was as near to heaven, to the angels, to ministering spirits in that home, where every thought seemed to be a blossom of rare fragrance, as I ever expect to be. After the evening prayer, Mrs. Bisbee seemed to be more angelic than ever. She would sit in her chair, and for a short time would listen to music heard by her and the youngest son only.

Thus it was that this woman, though gradually dying with the White Plague, had a real foretaste of heaven.

Gradually she wasted away, the family prayer circle, baptized with a mother's divine love, was no longer brought into requisition. She was confined to her bed, and there listened to the voice of the angels, which at times appeared to influence her, the vibrations of which seemed to form a halo of light, wisps of clouds woven into sentences which she would read, conveying a hopeful message of love, or words of cheer—this from the angels! Spirit return was to her unknown, and never thought of. "God had sent his angels to her"—that was her only thought. This home was divine; this mother an Angel; the two boys, jewels of her own settings; the father as full of good cheer as the blossom is of incense, all constituting a center of attraction for the wise sages in the realm of souls.

But the mother wasted away—died by inches. Early one evening she asked to be carried out to the porch on a cot, that she might once more survey the river, the clambering vines, the flowers, the waving grass, the stars scintillating in the river, and hear the evening songs of the birds, and sense more fully the exhilarating air around her own home. Then raising her hands towards heaven

she uttered a prayer tremulous and sweet with the emotions of her soul, invoking the blessing of God upon her two sons and their father, and then clasping tenderly each in one fond embrace, and bidding them an affectionate farewell, her form relaxed, the features became radiant, and then she passed into a slumber from which she was awakened in spirit life.

Thus it is that even the White Plague may be attended by exalted spirit phenomena, and earthly scenes presented surpassing in loveliness the dreams of poet or seer.

But there are many kinds of White Plagues, among them envy, slander, avariciousness, uncharitableness, licentiousness, unkindness to the poor, struggling mortals—if you possess any of them, you cannot die as Mrs. Bisbee did; the angels will not surround you in your last moments, and you will pass to the spirit realms with a White Plague staining your soul.

CULTIVATE BUBBLES OF KINDNESS.

I.

Is there a single human being in whom a Bubble of Kindness never existed? If so, then that person is totally depraved. An incident that occurred during the late rebellion illustrates our position. One day a Union prisoner, near Richmond, Va., whose features were rendered divinely radiant with thoughts of home, wife and children, sat upon a stone with his hands clasped and eyes turned heavenward as if in search for a ray of light that might bring fresh joy to his desponding soul. While thus calmly meditating a dog limped past him, and acted as if suffering great pain. A snap of the fingers and a few gentle words brought the ungainly brute to his side. Carefully examining the animal's lame leg, he found a sharp tack had been driven into its foot, causing a painful sore. He carefully extracted the same, tenderly dressed the wound, and affectionately caressing the ungainly beast, he pleasantly requested it to move along.

Time passed on. That prisoner dreamed of home; he

had visions of darling children and devoted wife, and the beautiful scenery of his woodland home, and so deep an impression did his rambles in dreamland make upon his mind, that he became home-sick, and resolutely resolved to escape from the hands of the enemy. A favorable opportunity soon offered, and one night he found himself outside the lines of the enemies' pickets, carefully proceeding northward. After a little while he heard the dismal, ferocious, heart-rending, and blood-curdling yell of an approaching bloodhound, that was pursuing him.

Oh! what thoughts surged in that soldier's breast! Overhead the heavens were bespangled with brilliant stars, as if so many pitying eyes gazing upon him! For just one moment, utterly bewildered, he kneels in prayer. It was brief, pathetic, and tremulous with tender emotion, as if the Angel of Pity had cast over him a mantle of protection, to shield him from impending danger. Rising from his knees, he breaks a club from the overhanging branches of a tree, to defend himself from the merciless jaws of the pursuing animal. Thoughts, radiant with affection—thoughts of home, wife and children—rise within his mind in rapid succession, and the Death Angel seems to stare him in the face. Oh! what a cruel fate—to die now, lacerated by the ferocious beast mercilessly pursuing him—the thought was too horrible to contemplate! To climb a tree, capture would be certain, and his return inevitable. Tears flowed down his cheeks—tears to baptize the tender memories of wife and home, as he resolves to meet the impending danger like a man! The fierce baying of the hound approaches like a death-knell, and vanishes in hellish echoes among the distant hills! All at once, with a single bound, the ferocious monster, with jaws distended and glaring eyes, stands before him, ready to tear him into shreds. There is a momentary silence, however. The dog ceases its furious yells, and gazes pleasantly and affectionately at the prisoner, and then approaches him and receives a pleasant word and a kind caress from his former benefactor.

II.

Oh! that was the very dog that the prisoner had once

relieved, and now with a Bubble of Kindness within its brute nature, it turned into a kind deliverer. As if suddenly inspired by an angel, as if grandly illuminated with a message from heaven, that dog suddenly started away, and commencing to yell furiously, it led the rebel pursuers away from the prisoner, and after it had accomplished that feat, returned quietly to him, and never forsook him, remaining with him until he was unfortunately recaptured, and taken back to Richmond. Never after that memorable occasion would that bloodhound pursue a Union prisoner.

If a Bubble of Kindness in a fierce dog is there a human being living less divine, less noble, less generous, less inclined to do good on certain occasions than such a brute?

At one time near Dayton, Nev., the body of John Suitine, a Swiss, was found. He had evidently been dead some time, and a part of his face had been eaten by coyotes. The attention of a passing Chinaman was attracted to the place where he was lying by the barking of a small dog that belonged to the dead man. The little fellow had kept sentinel over his dead master, and had endeavored to call the attention of passers by, as was remembered by several who passed and thought nothing of the dog's barking. Suitine left Dayton with a heavy load, and it is supposed that he sank down from exhaustion and died.

In that dog, too, there was a divine Bubble of Kindness, a spark of infinite love, that made its brute nature appear angelic.

IV.

Some one has said that Ole Bull's exquisite music on the violin awoke the deepest depths of his being, and every nerve seemed to vibrate to the drawing of his bow. His heart, his soul, was filled and satisfied. He felt a great gush of love welling within for God and his fellow men, and when the last note died away he was marvelously happy. Every good desire seemed to have been stirred by such divine music. But Bubbles of Kindness are even more potent when they manifest themselves toward those in deep distress.

It was a divine Bubble of Kindness that induced a poor German father, who had nine dependent children, to say: "Sir, if death were to come into that door, waiting to take one of my nine children, I would say," and here he pulled off his velvet cap and hurled it at the door, "Rascal, who cheated you into thinking I had one too many!"

A generous-hearted smile; a kind recognition; a cordial shake of the hand, and timely assistance in the hour of need, are merely the white-crested surface of Bubbles of Kindness, developing into timely fruit. Bubbles of Kindness are merely angelic thoughts seeking expression in earthly hearts. They bear upon their surface all that is grand, beautiful and sublime; they are the source from which lofty aspirations spring, and without them there would not be a vestige of heaven on earth.

Bubbles of Kindness oftentimes have a sad but tender expression. On one occasion a miner was about to enter a tunnel to secure a shovel, which he desired to take with him, when his wife said: "Never mind, I will get it; you take the child." As she started for the entrance of the tunnel she turned and said: "Kiss me first." Her husband did so and she started for the tunnel's mouth again, but just before she reached it she again turned around and laughingly said, "Kiss me once more." Her husband complied for the second time, and then she started for the tunnel. She had just reached the entrance when the mass of rocks and dirt above gave way, burying the unfortunate woman in the debris and causing her instant death. The father and child escaped unhurt.

Bubbles of Kindness inspired those sweet kisses, and their benign influence will linger on the lips of that miner throughout his journey of life, and he will ever remember, "Kiss me once more!" Bubbles of Kindness would rise continually within the human heart, if not cruelly suppressed. A dear little girl once saved a bank from being pillaged. The robber had not the heart to frighten or injure the sweet little maiden, who looked at him with a tender smile beaming on her innocent features, and who was present with her father behind the counter. Her presence begat Bubbles of Kindness in a desperate character. Among the poor, Bubbles of Kindness generally find their grandest and most divine expression. There is more

of the manifestation of God, seemingly, among them than among the wealthy. The self-sacrificing mother who starves herself that her children's hunger may be satisfied; who works like a slave to sustain them, within her soul are Bubbles of Kindness that shine forth more beautifully in the eyes of angels than the wealth of a Vanderbilt or a Gould. In thousands of different ways do these Bubbles of Kindness manifest themselves. On one occasion in New York City, it is said, that on Sixty-ninth street, just east of Third avenue, about fifty laborers were engaged in constructing a row of flats. At noon the men stopped work and all but one stout and bronzed young fellow brought out their dinner cans. Hurrying down the street came a young woman, pale, but good-looking, with a calico dress and a spotless but ragged shawl. She carried a dinner can in one hand and held with the other the plump and confiding fist of a little girl about three years old. The child talked and prattled away, and catching a glimpse of her father among the laborers drew the mother's attention to him by her laughter and delight. The laborers heard the little blue-hooded child and dropped their dinners. The one nearest to her took her in his arms and after some kissing and caressing she was passed from one to the other. It took the mother and little girl over fifteen minutes to reach the stalwart laborer, who proudly watched the fondling of his child. As the blue hood and her young mother departed the little one was given a cheer, and the rugged toilers resumed their work all the better for their brief contact with the mirth and innocence of childhood. In the Home Circle Fraternity Bubbles of Kindness are always present, and they manifest that sacred, soul-elevating character in a thousand different ways, in trying to alleviate the misfortunes of others, and making them happy.

ILLUMINATE YOUR OWN SOUL.

Every individual who has arrived at mature years, unless practically a degenerate, knows right from wrong. If he knows the right, and practices it in his daily intercourse with mortals, socially and in a business way, he then has a **LIGHT** within his own soul, beautifully iridescent with divine qualities, and which illuminates his pathway in earth life, and broadens and brightens his spiritual atmosphere when his earth career shall have been ended. If wholly destitute of that wonderfully potent light on earth, he will find himself in darkness when he passes to spirit life. That light, in order to assume a certain degree of brilliancy, must be carefully cultivated, must be tenderly nursed, and so guarded against degrading influences, that no dark taints mar its divine qualities.

If you possess any light in the spirit realms, in the land of souls, **you must carry it with you when the great change occurs that you call "death."** Your conduct in life delicately measures the light you possess, its degree of radiance, whether clear as the crystal or tainted with impurities, or tremulous with the waves of depraved emotions. What kind of a light does Harry Kendall Thaw have who shot Stanford White? What kind of a light has Evelyn Nesbit Thaw? And what think you of the light the murdered man possesses? Every pure thought nourishes one's light. Every philanthropic emotion renders its vibrations more divine. Every charitable act increases its volume, and renders it more brilliant.

It is no illusion, no dream, no fairy tale, the statement that you carry **THE LIGHT** of your soul with you. No one but yourself is responsible for that light. If you are covetous, if you allow depraved thoughts to nestle like so many serpents in your mind; if you are envious, or consort with the low and vile, then your light diminishes in potency, and in time may cease altogether, leaving you in spiritual darkness and stranded in a desert place.

In spirit life, darkness does not convey the idea that

the sun's rays are absent, or that the moon is in an eclipse, or that the twinkling stars are obscured by clouds, or that the gas or electric lights are out, but it illustrates the condition of your own soul, if you are enveloped in that darkness, to a greater or less extent. The degenerate, the absolutely depraved, the Black Hand assassin and the conscienceless murderer are destitute of soul-light to a great extent, hence find themselves in a certain degree of darkness in spirit life, while the advanced and pure spirits who stand by their sides trying to impress them, can see with perfect clearness. Thus it is that two spirits may be near each other, and one be in almost total darkness while the other will see things clearly around him.

In the material world light is derived from material means and methods, but spiritually not so. An orthodox church member, bubbling over with generous thoughts and impulses and engaged in philanthropic work, carries in his soul a brighter light and a grander illumination than the tight-fisted, money-loving Spiritualist, who never did a charitable act. This soul light is not the outgrowth of a creed, of worship, or belief. An atheist may possess this soul light in a marked degree; it may have the grandest qualities in the soul of one opposed to Spiritualism. It may even have a lovely glow in the spirit of a Salvation Army girl, while it is gloomy and forbidding in the soul of some of those who expound the nature of God's Providence from the liberal pulpit. In fact, this light may be brilliant in the soul of a scrub-woman, working at menial labor, while it is exceedingly dim in the nature of an influential multi-millionaire. A man who never kneeled in prayer, who regards the Bible as a myth and who rejects all creeds, and does not even believe in Spiritualism, but just believes in doing good, may have a wonderfully beautiful angelic light in his soul, while in the hypocritical saint, the light only burns dimly. Many young men are gradually putting out the divine light within them. There was Chas. Lambert; he went before the mayor of an Eastern city and said:

"See, I have just fifteen cents—one dime and a nickel. Saturday night my room rent is due. I haven't a friend in the city, sir, and I want work—work of any kind, sir.

Washing dishes would do, for I haven't eaten a substantial meal in a week."

The plea was the usual one; the speaker was not—a *rara avis* among the species. A tall, gentlemanly young man, smooth shaven, fancy waistcoat of the latest pattern, neat clothing of the most fashionable cloth, a handsome tie—everything betokening a man on the high road to prosperity rather than one on the path to starvation.

"Lambert is my name, sir; Charles E. Gilmoursie-Lambert, Oxford graduate, lieutenant in her majesty's service during the Boer war, cousin of the Earl of Cavan, and—but we'll let that pass. I'm not looking for charity; what I wish is work. I'm not out to fleece any one; get me a place washing dishes and I'll thank you most sincerely, sir."

He told the mayor that he was best man at the Duke of Manchester's wedding. Then he had \$35,000, but horses, wine, and women dissipated fortune, after which his people turned him off.

Thus gradually the light within his soul has been growing dimmer, and unless he "mends" his way, he will land in darkness on the spirit side of life.

As the daily papers said, one Betsy Jenks was found dead in a back alley. She had lately been released from jail, the worst looking specimen of humanity the police had ever gazed upon. There were putrid sores on her neck and face, as bad in appearance as any food a craven vulture had ever eat. Her hair was disheveled, her face ghastly, swollen, while thereon one could clearly discern an expression as if overshadowed with concentrated Satanic hate. By her side was a whisky bottle drained of its contents. A dead horse, cow, or hog, putrefying in the sun, could not have been more repulsive. The scent from Miss Jenks' body was as poisonous as the miasmatic vapors of a disease-breeding swamp, or rotten cesspool. There lay the ultimate of incestuous disease, of riotous living in the under world of "pleasure," of carnal thoughts that stung her soul like vipers, of an existence exhausted in the dens of vice, her whole life being in reality a cancerous growth of huge dimensions without a single light of radiation. She had no light beaming in her soul;

with her there was nothing but hideous darkness, a cheerless desert waste, not a single vibration in her soul that indicated a desire for reformation. She had lived in the darkness of sin, and passed to the realms of souls a dwarfed spirit, in darkness, in solitude. Near the corpse was her spirit unseen by policeman or mortals, and more repulsive if possible than her mortal body. She has died thoroughly rotten with disease, with thoughts and desires so unclean that there, apparently, was no light in her soul; she died a degenerate.

Thus it is, if you wish to advance spiritually, you must carefully cultivate **THE LIGHT** within the soul, until it beams forth clear and bright, in harmony with that **LIGHT** in some one of the higher spheres, and that **LIGHT** can only be nourished, sustained and enlarged, by **BEING GOOD** and **DOING GOOD**, thus enabling you to get in tune with vibrations from the spheres of exalted spirits.

SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL IN SPIRIT LIFE.

I.

That all humanity emanated from one common source, whether that source be Nature, Principle, Law, or a being designated as Infinity or God, no one has any reason to doubt. That all are linked together in one common bond, designated as humanity, is recognized everywhere; that the right to live is as sacred to the peasant as to the king; as important to the ignoramus as the sage, and that "right" involves certain responsibilities. Health is attained by living in accordance with nature's laws. The thief, the highwayman, the murderer, the wife-beater and the liar, all can gain that important desideratum by following the methods that lead to it, and be free from pain and loathsome diseases. This is a characteristic of natural law as connected with the physical organization. To maintain good health, no religion, no adoration of any particular deity—Brahm, Vishnu, Osiris, Jupiter,

Jesus, Jove or God—is necessary. It is maintained by living simply in harmony with Nature's laws, without respect to any religion whatever. There is, however, **A SPIRITUAL LAW**, broad and comprehensive in its nature, which is intimately connected with the soul, and which shapes its future destiny. The one who lives exclusively for self, whose whole aim is self-aggrandizement, and who takes no active interest in the welfare of others, has an equally narrow field assigned him in the spiritual realms. The selfish cultivate no heaven within them; the uncharitable cannot, while that feeling predominates, behold the transcendent beauties of the celestial regions; to the unforgiving, only the lower spheres of spirit life are open for their reception; to the egotist, the bigoted, the supercilious, the haughty and proud, nothing responds that is beautiful and elevating in characteristics.

Being a Spiritualist does not indicate that your spiritual nature is refined. Knowing that spirit friends can commune with you is no passport to their presence in spirit life. Proclaiming the truths of intercommunion between the two worlds, will not aid you in the least, unless you refine your spiritual nature.

II.

Off in Missouri, in early times, we knew an old colored woman. She was ignorant; she could not read, and her only treasure consisted in a magnanimous heart and generous impulses. Her presence was a benediction; her voice mild, sweet and gentle; and her only aspiration to do good. Aunt Chloe, as she was called, was regarded with reverential awe by the whites as well as the colored. She was blessed with a strange, weird knowledge of the efficacy of herbs, which she said God gave her. She was herself a healing balm; her touch even on the brow of the fevered patient would dispel the disease. She could, it was said, see God (it was a spirit), hear his voice, receive his kindly admonitions and advice, and learn how the sick should be treated. She had a large segment of heaven in her nature, and it bloomed there with transcendent beauties; a golden thread from the supernal regions entwined her generous impulses; her soul chords

vibrated with a spirit as kindly, as noble, as possessed by any earthly sage, or philanthropist. She passed along in life, her grandeur of soul and philanthropic impulses acknowledged by all. Her mission was not altogether among the poor, but the wealthy sought her as a nurse. She had been a slave, and at times badly treated by a cruel and relentless master. After the war of the rebellion, she left him, and for a time he ignored her altogether.

III.

Finally, Aunt Chloe's old master was taken sick, given up by the physician to die, and she was sent for to nurse him in his last moments. Did she go? Yes, she did, for her God told her to go, and laden with angelic impulses, star-crowned, and with a retinue of benign spirits, she retraced her steps to the old plantation. It was evening when she went. The sun had just set and the rainbow-tinted clouds in the west and the balmy air of summer time and the aroma of flower, garden and fields, seemed to be intensified a hundred fold as this dark-hued Savior passed along toward the home of her former bad master. In her mind, however, she did not even chide or blame him; her God standing by her side enveloped her with the grandeur of his own soul, and she walked as if in a cloud of hazy light. She entered the sick chamber. The windows were open and the sweet scent of flowers and fragrant vines pervaded the room like an incense from heaven. Raising her hand heavenward she said:

"Lor' me, Marsa James, you ain't going to die! God says so."

Her face seemed to be illuminated and her eyes to shine with dazzling brightness, and her actions like one having authority, and the attendants gazed at her with superstitious awe. She cast the medicine one side; compelled the attendants to go to an adjoining room, and then kneeled in prayer by the side of her former cruel master. She placed her hand upon his head, and in tones pathetically sweet, and tremulous with melody of heaven, she prayed not only for his restoration to health, but that his acts might in the future be more kind and

gentle, and his presence a benediction to all. The prayer was crude in language, but as pure in essence as the flowers that bloom in paradise and as earnest as any ever uttered by the Nazarene. The man apparently dying seemed to rally, and whispered, "Auntie, I have been cruel to you. Will you forgive me?"

"Lor' yes, Marsa James, Ize forgive you."

"Auntie, cure me, and I will be as good in the future as I have been bad in the past."

"Stop talking, Marsa James, and go to sleep. The Lawd sez you shall get well."

IV.

What a grand scene. Heaven interblending and overcoming hell! An ignorant old woman once a slave, forgetting all wrongs, banishing all hates, subduing all bitter feelings, standing by the side of her sick master nigh unto death, and with a halo of spiritual light beaming with all the beauties of heaven enveloping her—what a grand scene! With her hand gently laid upon the sick man's head she soon had him asleep, and then sitting there, he was charged with her healing magnetism; he was bathed with the divine essence that emanated from her soul as naturally as the aroma from a flower.

The morning was ushered in, not only with anthems of birds and chirping of insects, but there was rejoicing in that family circle, when the patient awakened, relieved of pain, the fever gone, and feeling apparently well. The daughters threw their arms around the old slave and wept with joy. The wife and mother raising her hands towards heaven, thanked God that Aunt Chloe lived to save her husband. Special provisions were made for her during her earthly pilgrimage. A fine cabin was refurnished for her special use; and orders given that during her earth life, her larder should be supplied entirely to her liking. Her master, once characterized for his cruelty, had seen through the **DOOR OF DEATH** into the celestial regions, and now stood forth redeemed, dealing only in the currency of the spiritual realms.

V.

The Translated.

Finally Aunt Chloe's mission was ended. The summons at last came to her. No death was ever grander, of philosopher, sage, king, queen or statesman. It was morning when the final summons came. The azure east seemed as if illuminated with brighter colors, the aroma of flowers sweeter, and the air purer, as the family surrounded her bed and listened to her words of wisdom. She saw the angels around her bed and conveyed messages to each one, and told them of the beauty and grandeur of the spiritual realms, and exhorted each one to be good and do good. Her advent into spirit life was a pageant more grand than ever attended any earthly sovereign. She was spiritually wealthy. Her soul was beaming with charity and love.

Thus it often is that the humblest of God's children are selected for some noble work. And we say to you that without charity, without gentleness and kindness of spirit, without aiding to lift the burdens of others, and without doing something of importance for the general good, you have no currency of the bright spheres of spirit life. There are thousands of Spiritualists who cannot approach the sphere of light where Aunty Chloe now lives, until they shall have cultivated a spirit in harmony with hers—being good and doing good.

THE FLOWER IN THE SNOW.

I.

So eager are the departments of nature to perform their allotted tasks that in the Swiss mountains and in the far north, delicate little flowers are seen blossoming on the edge of a drift of snow. The plant seems to say: "I was ordered to be here by the middle of June; the birds and the travelers expect me; it is a cold day, but I am here." It is a peculiar, half-sad pleasure to come upon these shivering, delicate forms of painted leaf. One feels as though the wind should fall for their sakes, and for them the sun shoot hotter rays around the mountains.

In the awful snow-storm and frost-storm of Dakota recently there fell a singular and rather beautiful form of human character—a field-hand, educated but unknown, tender as a refined woman, but strong and bold as a soldier. In the cold embrace of ice and snow, with all the indications around him of an effort to reach home—the home of a hired man—his lifeless body recalled the pathos of the lines:

"Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown."

The farmer in whose employ the man was passing the winter knew only the name which the toiler had given him when he sought and found the much-needed employment, but in the months which passed between the August harvest and the terrific cyclone of ice the man never sent nor received a letter. To him, no institution of our country was of less value than the postal department. The name of John Crosby stood for this personage, but no one knows whether that name was baptismal, or was picked up along the way by himself, or by some other, for the concealment of a fact, rather than for establishing a family connection.

General Custer once said, in a chat regarding nameless soldiers, that he had in his army men who sustained

no relations to the world; men who knew nothing of their first home or birth-place, nor how many years they had been in this life. He had read the burial service over one regarding whose death he could not send word to any person or any village in any country.

Among these lonely mortals was this John Crosby. He was not more than 21 years of age. Nature keeps a record of all the early years, and tells whether this or that face is 15 or 20. Nature follows the child and says plainly, this human soul has gotten 4 or 70 or 16 or 20 years away from the cradle, but at last this great mother ceases to paint the days and seasons on the face, and often 60 wears the image of 50 or 70, and the real distance from the mother's bosom is lost, never to be guessed again. John Crosby was about 20 years old when his heart turned into ice and ceased from its memories and longings.

He had presented himself at a certain school district in Dakota, to secure, if possible, a place as schoolmaster. The office had just been assigned to another. It was found that all such thrones had secured royal occupants, and that there was before this youth the prospect of an idle winter. He therefore applied at a farm-house for a place as a common farm hand, and was accepted by rather a superior plowman by the name of Eastman. The new workman proved to be worthy of his wages and his home. He seemed to live for his daily tasks and for the idle moments which the winter evenings and winter Sundays brought.

On that morning in January after that awful death-chill had passed by, this youth was found dead in the field. His face wore the impression of peace, and seemed to say, "This is the end." Good, simple, almost tearful funeral rites were given the body, but as for the tender soul, it was far away, in that land:

Where storms do never come.

When the family explored the vacant room of their toiler with the hope of finding some name or town that might direct them whither to send news of the death, they found nothing except scraps of poetic thought written upon every piece of paper available in the scanty

house. All the blank leaves of the stranger's books were made to carry the young heart's reflections, as they came to him in the evenings and Sundays of a Dakota winter.

In many of these verses the form of his mother figures, thus showing the purity of a heart which can from the stormy passions of early manhood sing more kind words to absent mother than it can indite to some belle of the ball-room, or to some invisible idol of the romantic sentiment:

"The mother's love stands pilot e'er to guide
And keeps life's boat from sinking in the waves,
It guards from many an ill, from many an evil saves.

"Such was the blessing of my glad, first years,
Remembered now it rules my errant will
When life is bittered with its grief-wrung tears
Calm grows my spirit as she cries: 'Be still,'
Recalls the purpose I must yet fulfill,
Propels me onward with a specter hand,
Invisible but mighty, in its power grand."

In all the hundreds of lines found in this vacated room, the genius of the poem is Memory. Though only a boy, he was always looking back, as though the past had been too sorrowful to permit even the enthusiasm of youth to turn toward the future. His home was:

"Back upon the forest's very ledge,
Set in the woods and garlanded with vine
Above the other homes, built on the ledge,
There stood the old stone cottage that was mine."

This poem is no doubt a continuous composition—a memory, but as the stanzas are not numbered, the pages come to us in all that disorder which marked the leaves of prophecy which the wind took from the hands of the sibyl.

Over all these penciled verses, over the name of the man who was able to teach a school or to be a wage-worker on a farm, over the youth who never sent nor received a letter, who did his daily work in a manner skillful and conscientious, over a heart which was full of high and

pure thoughts, and which was as rich in language as in virtue, that Dakota storm came and spread that mystery which a tragic death always completes. Perhaps death came in the form of mercy; for no doubt the mother had gone from earth, and the stone cottage in the edge of the forest had opened its doors at last to send its motherless children into perpetual exile.

The above narrative is from the pen of Rev. David Swing, the great Divine, just before his death many years ago.

II.

Here was a member of the Home Circle Fraternity, John Crosby, who assumed the responsibility of life without a murmur, and from whose lips an unkind word was probably never uttered. He had made many investments in the Celestial City, the home of angels, and was greeted there with songs of welcome. Ah! you cross, crabbed, fretful, selfish mortal—whoever you are—who never tries to make others happy, you will see that the patient, cheerful toiler, John Crosby, meets with appreciation in the City Celestial, while you will be compelled to reform your perverse nature before you advance. It has been well said that “A single bitter word may disquiet an entire family for a whole day. One surly glance casts a gloom over the household, while a smile of sunshine may light up the darkest and weariest hours. Like unexpected flowers which spring up along our path, full of freshness, fragrance and beauty, so kind words and gentle acts and sweet dispositions make glad the sacred spot called home. No matter how humble the abode, if it be sweetened with kindness and smiles, the heart will turn longingly toward it from all the tumult of the world, and home, if it be ever so homely, will be the dearest spot beneath the circuit of the sun.”

III.

Angelic Impulses.

Five men, all prominent in financial circles, were clustered about a table in the gentlemen's dining-room on the second floor of a restaurant, as related by the Philadelphia Inquirer, discussing the current gossip of the

busy world in which they moved. After the more substantial portion of the meal had been consumed, and the quintet were comfortably sipping an expensive brand of champagne, the conversation turned on the various methods of getting the greatest amount of pleasure out of the coming holiday season. As soon as the subject was broached, one of the party became unusually quiet, and took scarcely any part in the lively discussion which followed. After the other four had offered various plans and suggestions, the silent member of the party quietly remarked: "You are all wrong, and to prove the truth of my words, I wish to tell you a little incident which happened to me Christmas eve two years ago, and of which I have never spoken since. While stopping to glance almost unconsciously at the display in the windows of an Eighth street confectionery store, my attention was attracted by two children, a boy apparently about eight years old, and a girl about ten. They were joyously pointing out all the dainties in the windows to each other, and speculating upon the amounts of the many good things which could be purchased for a quarter. They appeared to be warmly dressed, but their clothes were of the plainest and cheapest material, and they were evidently the children of a poor workingman, who was able to support his family, but to supply them with none of the luxuries of life. From their conversation I learned that their father had given each of them twenty-five cents to spend for Christmas, and the great question was what to buy with the money. While the matter was still undecided, a poor, haggard-looking woman came along, leading a little girl, and they both looked as if they had not eaten anything for some time. The woman stepped up to another woman, richly dressed in furs, and timidly asked for help, but her appeal was unheeded, and she was haughtily ordered to stand aside. As the poor creature slunk away in the greatest dejection, I noticed a few hurried whispers between the two children, and they quickly followed the woman and child, and when they came up with them, pressed something into the woman's hand, who was left speechless by the sudden good fortune. As the children

passed me when they returned, I heard the girl say: 'They'll enjoy it more than we would. We'll be at home to-morrow, with mom and pop, and have a good dinner, and they'll have nothing.' When I recovered my senses both parties were gone, but I'll wager anything that those children who gave their all had a happier Christmas than I, who was the possessor of thousands, but gave nothing towards making others happy."

The story apparently touched those present, and in a short time the table was deserted, with the wine bottles still partially full.

In this touching narration we have a beautiful illustration of the angelic impulses in two children. It was a scene where the terrestrial and celestial blended, where squalid misery and a wave of transcendent goodness met, In the good time coming, when the religion of the Home Circle Fraternity shall have been fully established, every prosperous home will have one or more rooms to shelter the unfortunate; one or more seats at the table, where the hungry can obtain food; and the thoughts will not center around self, but each day, the question will be asked, what despondent soul can I render more happy or prosperous? Each member of the Home Circle Fraternity does good, independent of all creeds, and all forms of worship.

OVER THE HILLS FROM A POOR-HOUSE



WHO was always counted, they say,
Rather a bad stick any way,
Splintered all over with dodges and
tricks,

Known as "The worst of the deacon's
six;"

I, the truant, saucy and bold,
The one black sheep in my father's

fold,

Once on a time, as the stories say,
Went over the hill on a winter's day—
Over the hill to the poorhouse.

Tom could save what twenty could earn;
But giving was something he never could learn;
Isaac could half o' the Scriptures speak—
Committed a hundred verses a week;
Never forgot, an' never slipped;
But honor thy father and mother he skipped;
So over the hill to the poorhouse.

As for Susan, her heart was kind,
An' good—what there was of it, mind;
Nothin' too big, an' nothin' too nice,
Nothin' she wouldn't sacrifice
For one she loved; an' that 'ere one
Was herself, when all was said an' done.
An' Charley an' Becca meant well, no doubt,
But any one could pull 'em about.
An' all our folks ranked well, you see
Save one poor fellow, and that was me;

An' when, one dark an' rainy night,
A neighbor's horse went out o' sight,
They hitched on me as the guilty chap

That carried one end o' the halter strap;
An' I think myself, that view of the case
Wasn't altogether out o' place;
My mother denied it, as mothers do,
But I am inclined to believe 'twas true,
Though for me one thing might be said—
That I, as well as the horse, was led;
And the worst of whisky spurred me on,
Or else the deed would have never been done.
But the keenest grief I ever felt
Was when my mother beside me knelt,
An' cried an' prayed, till I melted down,
As I wouldn't for half the horses in town,
I kissed her fondly then and there,
An' swore henceforth to be honest and square.

I served my sentence—a bitter pill
Some fellows should take who never will;
And then I decided to go "out West,"
Concludin' 'twould suit my health the best;
Where, how I prospered I never could tell,
But fortune seemed to like me well,
An' somehow every vein I struck
Was always bubblin' over with luck.
An' better than that, I was steady an' true,
An' put my good resolutions through,
But I wrote to a trusty old neighbor, an' said:
"You tell 'em, old fellow, that I am dead,
An' died a Christian; 'twill please 'em more
Than if I had lived the same as before."

But when this neighbor, he wrote to me:
"Your mother's in the poorhouse," says he,
I had a resurrection straightway,
An' started for her that very day.
And when I arrived where I was grown
I took good care that I shouldn't be known,
But I bought the old cottage, through and through
Of some one Charley had sold it to.
And held back neither work or gold,
To fix it up as it was of old.

The same big fireplace, wide an' high,
Flung up its cinders toward the sky;
The old clock ticked on the corner shelf—
I wound it an' set it a-going myself;
An' if everything wasn't just the same
Neither I nor money was to blame.

Then over the hills to the poor house.

One blowin' blusterin' winter's day,
With a team an' cutter I started away,
My fiery nags were as black as a coal,
(They some't resembled the horse I stole,)
I hitched, an' entered the poorhouse door.
A poor old woman was scrubbin' the floor.
She rose to her feet in great surprise,
And looked, quite startled, in my eyes.
I saw the whole of her trouble's trace
In the lines that marred her dear old face;
"Mother!" I shouted, "your sorrow's done!
You're adopted along o' your horse thief son,
Come over the hill from the poorhouse."

She didn't faint; she knelt by my side,
An' thanked the Lord, till I fairly cried,
An' maybe our ride wasn't pleasant an' gay,
An' maybe our cottage wasn't warm an' bright,
An' maybe it wasn't a pleasant sight
To see her gettin' the evenin' tea
An' frequently stoopin' and kissin' me;
An' maybe we didn't live happy for years,
In spite of my brothers' and sisters' sneers,
Who often said, as I have heard,
That they wouldn't own a prison bird
(Though they're gettin' over that, I guess,
For all of 'em owe me more or less).

But we learned one thing, an' it cheers a man
In always a-doin' the best he can.
That whether on the Big Book a blot
Gets over a fellow's name or not,
Whenever he does a deed that's white,

It's credited to him fair and right,
An' when you hear the great bugle's notes,
An' the Lord divides his sheep an' goats;
However they may settle my case,
Wherever they may fix my place,
My good old Christian mother, you'll see,
Will be there to stand right up for me,

Over the hill from the poorhouse.

—Will Carlton.

While the above impressive portrayal may be simply a poetic license, yet underlying it is an extremely fruitful lesson. There are poor-houses; there are mothers there who have reared a family of children, and then are denied a home with them. Occasionally one is taken from there by a wayward son, and furnished an exceptionally pleasant home.

Jane Haskins was the name of an old woman living in a poor-house in one of the counties near Chicago. She had an exceptionally beautiful expression to her countenance when talking of her son, who left her home when a boy, so many years previous, in Alabama that he thought her dead. As she soon after moved away from the place where she was living when the son left her home to seek his fortune out in the wide, wide world, he failed to locate her. In the poor-house, it was her boy Jim, her principal thought in her conversation with the other inmates. If she picked a dainty flower in the field, she wished that Jim was there that she might ornament his person by attaching it to a button-hole of his coat. Poetical by nature, a dreamer of dreams, she always saw some fairy outline in the burnished colors of a summer sunset, and she would clasp her hands in an ecstasy of delight, exclaiming, "If my boy were here to enjoy this painting of nature my happiness would be complete. Some day I shall meet him in a large city, and he will care for me, for I so dreamed." Her lost son was her principal thought—a thought imbedded in the aroma of love, and which vibrated in her soul so much angelic sweetness that all the inmates loved her, but regarded her as a harmless lunatic, continually talking of her son Jim. In the poor-house she was constantly ministering

to some one; her presence a ray of sunshine; her touch a healing balm; her smile of angelic sweetness. In all her acts of kindness in her own feeble way her only thought was, "What I do for you, I hope some one will do for my boy Jim." If giving a dose of medicine to one suffering from pain she would invariably say, "I do it for you, for my boy Jim may need assistance, and how could I expect it given to him if I did not give it to you?" Thus every day brought its duties to her, feebly, but willingly performed, and as time passed on the inmates ceased to notice her peculiarities.

Old age is beautiful, sublime, poetic, when the nature is sweet, self-sacrificing and unselfish, even if "dotage" has come with its autumnal fringes, and expiring notes of a fruitful summer life. The inmates spoke of her in bated breath as "the sweet old lady," "the angel of the farm," "the Divine Nurse," and there was a reverence for her equal to that of any Catholic saint.

Finally one day some one of the inmates read in the Chicago Tribune that Jim Haskins was the rider in a winning race at Washington Park, and had finally amassed a fortune. The news was imparted to the venerable mother just as she had risen from a prayer, wherein her principal request was that God and the angels would protect her boy, Jim, and finally bring him back to her. "Yes," she said, "that is my boy. In the dream I had he was riding a winning horse, and waving a flag on which was inscribed the word **MOTHER**."

Friends assisted the old lady to come to Chicago, and she was detected on the streets inquiring of many passing her, if they knew her boy Jim. A kind-hearted policeman took the matter in hand, had her conveyed to the police station, and then commenced looking for her boy as set forth in the Tribune. Within a few days he was located at one of Chicago's leading hotels, and when asked if his mother's name was Jane Haskins, "Yes," he replied, "but I am sure she must be dead. I left her living in Alabama."

"Maybe not," replied the policeman. An old lady is at the station anxiously looking for her son, whose name she gives as James Haskins."

"Great, God!" he anxiously said, "is my mother liv-

ing? In my wanderings I had lost all track of the family."

Engaging a carriage he and the police officer drove rapidly to the station. As they entered the matron's room she said: "Hush! Hark!" In an adjoining room a tremulous voice was heard in prayer, that God would bring her boy, Jim to her; a prayer divinely sweet and pure. The eyes of those listening were filled with tears and their hearts beat with angelic emotions as she concluded her prayer. The matron opened the door, and there standing, with features illuminated with a divine light, was the old mother, instantly recognized by her son, who tenderly embraced her, showering kisses upon her pale cheeks. He furnished her with a home where she was blessed with every comfort, and where he visited her daily.

Thus was the venerable mother's dream realized, and a new life in her old age opened up before her, she furnishing an actual "Over the Hill from the Poor-house."

There is something solemnly sweet in old age when accompanied with the grand qualities of Jane Haskins. Old age is the vanishing note of life, and as the last sound of the expiring note of the singer is the softest and sweetest, so is old age, when rounded out like Mrs. Haskins's, the most sublime, beautiful and cheering of the whole life. So live, we say, that your life in the autumn years of your existence, may be sweet and wholesome, and your presence one perennial spring of pleasure to those that surround you. Prepare for old age in the spring time of life; cultivate the fruits of life that will mature in the autumn of your existence, making you a blessing and benediction to all, with vibrations in harmony with those in the higher spheres of spirit life.

OVER THE HILL TO THE POOR-HOUSE.



OVER THE hill to the poor-house I'm
trudging my weary way,
I, a woman of seventy, and only a trifle
gray;
I, who am smart and chipper for all
the years I've told,
As many another woman that isn't
half as old.

Over the hill to the poor-house—it seems so horrid queer;
Over the hill to the poor-house—I can't quite make it
clear;

Many a step I've taken a-toiling to and fro,
But this is a sort of journey I never thought to go.

What is the use of heaping on me a pauper's shame?
Am I lazy or crazy, am I blind or lame?
True, I'm not so supple nor yet so awful stout,
But charity ain't no favor if one can live without.

I am willing and anxious and ready any day
To earn a decent living and pay my honest way,
For I can earn my victuals, and more, too, I'll be bound,
If anybody only is willing to having me around.

Once I was young and handsome—I was, upon my soul;
Once my cheeks were roses, my eyes were black as coal;
And I don't remember in those days a-hearing people say
For any kind of reason that I was in their way.

'Taint no use of boasting or talking over free,
But many a house and home was open then to me;
Many a handsome offer I had from likely men,
And nobody ever hinted that I was a burden then.

And when to John I was married, sure he was good and
smart,

But he and all the neighbors would own I done my part;
For life was all before me and I was young and strong,
And I worked the best that I could in trying to get along.

And so we worked together, and life was hard but gay,
With now and then a baby to cheer us on our way,
Till we had half a dozen, and all growed clean and neat,
And went to school like others and had enough to eat.

And so we worked for our children, and raised them
every one,
Worked for them, summer and winter, just as we ought
to have done.
Only perhaps we humored them, which some good folks
condemn,
But every couple's children's a heap the best of them.

Strange how much we think of our blessed little ones—
I'd have died for my daughters, I'd have died for my
sons—
But God he made the rule of love, but when we're old
and gray,
I've noticed it sometimes somehow fails to work the other
way.

Strange, another thing, when our boys and girls are
grown,
And when, excepting Charlie, they had left me all alone,
When John he nearer and nearer came and dearer seemed
to be,
The Lord of Hosts he came one day and took him away
from me.

Still I was bound to struggle on and never cringe or fall,
Still I worked for Charlie, for Charlie was now my all,
And Charlie was pretty good to me, with scarce a word
or frown,
Till at last he went a-courting and brought a wife from
town.

She was somewhat dressy, and hadn't a pleasant smile,
She was quite conceity and carried a heap of style.

But if ever I tried to be friends I did with her, I know,
But she was hard and proud and I couldn't make it go.

She had an education, and that was good for her,
But when she twitted me en mine 'twas carrying things
too fer,

And I told her once, 'fore company, and it almost made
her sick,

That I never swallowed a grammer or ate a 'rithmetic.

So 'twas only a few days before the thing was done—
They was a family of themselves and I another one;
And a very little cottage one family will do,
But I have never seen a house that was big enough for
two.

And I never could speak to suit her, never could please
her eye,

And it made me independent, and then I didn't try.
But I was terribly staggered and felt it like a blow,
When Charlie turned again' me and told me I could go.

I went to live with Susan, but Susan's house was small,
And she was always a hinting how snug it was for us all;
And what with her husband's sisters, and what with
children three,
'Twas easy enough to discover there wasn't room enough
for me.

And then I went to Thomas, the oldest son I've got,
For Thomas' buildings cover the half of an acre lot;
But the children all was on me and I couldn't stand their
sauce,

And Thomas said I needn't think I was coming there to
boss.

And then I wrote to Rebecca, my girl who lives out West,
And to Isaac, not far from her, some twenty miles at best,
And one of them said 'twas too warm there for any one
so old,

The other one had an opinion the climate was too cold.

So they have shirked and slighted me and shifted me
about,

So they have well-nigh soured me and worn my old heart
out;
But still I have borne up pretty well and wasn't much put
down
Till Charlie went to the poormaster and put me on the
town.

Over the hill to poor-house—my children, dear, good-by—
Many a night I've watched you when only God was nigh,
And God will judge between us, but I will always pray
That you shall never suffer the half I have to-day.

—Will M. Carlton.

There is no charm to an aspiring soul in the impressive word, poor-house. It always has an undertone of sadness, an expiring echo in a sepulchre of lost hopes, a sort of graveyard where are buried all the sweet and cherished memories and anticipations of one's past life, and no one in extreme poverty ever thinks of it without a shudder of grim despair passing through the system! But there may be some things far worse, for aught we know, connected with human life than so-called poverty, destitution in everything of a worldly nature, with the poor-house confronting one in the not far distant future. The very sound of that word, however, to the sensitive mind vibrates a painful sensation in the soul, far more sad and tearful than that of **DEATH**, which is considered the most mournful word in the English language, a word draped in crepe, presaging the coffin, the grave and grim destair, and yet from the higher spiritual standpoint, it reflects all that is grand, beautiful and soul-inspiring—simply a gateway to the spirit realms.

The poor-house is generally considered the lowest note in the scale of life, a note when expressed in the voice, trills a sorrow so plaintive, so tender, so mournful, so tear-stained, that one can seem to feel the intoned sighs, and moans of anguish of those who compose a funeral cortege conveying to the yawning grave some loved one of the family circle. But however sepulchral the word sounds, there are cases where a poor-house has been the scene of a triumphant angelic pageant, its beauty transcending the loftiest dream of poet or seer.

The conventional poor-house, of which Will Carlton sings so plaintively, so sadly, was, like all others of its kind, an asylum for those unable to take care of themselves; but the poor house of which we now write was not an asylum where attendants feed and take care of the indigent and sick at the public expense.

The poor house about which this lesson we intend to convey concentrates, was in no sense like the county poor-houses scattered throughout the United States, with their attendant comforts and blessings. It was a rickety, dilapidated, two-room house, constructed on the back of an otherwise vacant lot; a **POOR** house indeed, with a poverty-stricken old man living therein, who, by doing odd jobs, earned a scanty living; yet he appeared to be happy in his squalid surroundings. He was a romantic genius, a strange, weird combination of inward charms that at times seemed to show themselves in part just as the lily does in its first process of escaping from its bud, and becoming a beautiful flower. He was a sort of diamond in the rough, an expiring note in the Song of Life, a reflection of some grand intention on the part of Nature, which was thwarted in its action in the process of development, and thus its good designs misplaced in a large degree.

Indeed, this old man, "The Swiss Minstrel," as he was called, did not have a home in the ordinary conventional poor-house, sustained by taxing the public, but in a **poor** house, a semblance of a home-like structure. There he lived, merely a vestige of his former self. He was at one time, as the paper said, a favorite singer, frequently taking a minor part in English opera; and yet in his old age and decrepitude, he could still sing the plaintive melodies, trills, warbles and sweet songs of life in his mountain home in Switzerland, and he would gather around him a crowd in the street, where he would during the day obtain nickels enough to furnish him a bare living in his own constructed poor house. This Swiss Minstrel was regarded as eccentric, yet his soul was divinely illuminated; he was a born philanthropist, an angel in the rough, his life a perennial melody, and his acts so much valuable coin in the higher spheres of the spirit realms.

This Minstrel was frequently called upon to sing the

anthem that was sung at the death of his beloved wife in his mountain home in Switzerland. It seemed that when he sung it his voice, so tremulously sweet, would lose its huskiness, arising from a surgical operation, and all who heard him were melted to tears. It was only on rare occasions that this child of nature would sing this Swiss anthem, it brought up so many sad reminiscences in connection with his beloved wife's funeral; and whenever he did sing it, the papers said, he claimed he saw his wife, who sung with him in angelic tones, and he wondered that others could not hear her seraphic voice, which accompanied him, and the tears would stream down his face, as the last note of the anthem would melt in sweet vibrations in this poor house that he occupied, while the humble neighbors from the Swiss highland would sit in solemn stillness, and with reverent awe and tearful sadness listen to the entrancing music of the poor old Swiss Minstrel, who said his angel wife was standing by his side. Alas! what a scene!—a poor house in the most comprehensive sense of that word, and yet an Angel of Poverty, Light and Love was there to minister to one of earth's children.

Finally the old man was taken sick, confined to his cot in his poor house home, and he was kindly ministered unto by his humble neighbors, who could not understand him when he talked of hearing seraphic music; of seeing his dear wife; of taking part in the singing of celestial choristers; of seeing the scintillating waters of a flower-laden garden; of inhaling the exquisite aroma of blooming trees in the fields of Paradise, and he would extend his arms as if embracing, as he said, his beloved wife. One evening as a few of the neighbors crowded into his poor house home, his eyes seemed to glisten with unnatural brightness; his sunken cheek became illuminated with an angelic smile; his room without a light in the early evening time seemed to be aglow with something divine when he said, "My wife and the angel choristers have come to sing their last song, and to take me with them to join them in singing in the classical schools of Paradise." And then seemingly transfigured, he sat on the side of his cot, and sung the songs of his own Swiss home, with such transcendent sweetness in his voice that a professor of music who happened to be pres-

ent, said, Divine! Divine!! Finally the end came to this angelic man in his poor house home. The light of his life went out; his voice was hushed, his pallid face took on the hue of death, his eyes closed, and thus his career ended on earth. He did not live and die in the conventional poor-house, but in a poor house of his own—so poor, oh! so poor, yet scrupulously clean; and the very air seemed spiritualized with the smiles of angels. Thus this good man passed to the higher realms.

I had rather be this Swiss Minstrel, dying in a poor house, with no relatives to mourn his death, ministered unto in his last moments by the angels, than to be a king crowned with riches, dying in a palace, yet unworthy to be admitted into the spirit presence of this Swiss Minstrel.

THE LIFE OF 'OSTLER JOE.



STOOD at eve, as the sun went down,
by the grave where a woman lies,
Who lured men's souls to the shores
of sin with the light of her wan-
ton eyes;

Who sang the song that the siren sang
on the treacherous Lurely height,
Whose face was as fair as a summer
day and whose heart was as black as night.

Yet a blossom I fain would pluck to-day from the garden
above her dust—

Not the langorous lily of soulless sin, nor the blood-red
rose of lust.

But a sweet white blossom of holy love that grew in the
one green spot

In the arid desert of Phryne's life, where all was parched
and hot.

* * * * *

In the summer, when the meadows were aglow with blue
and red,

Joe, the 'ostler of the Magpie, and fair Annie Smith were
wed;;

Plump was Annie, plump and pretty, with a cheek as
white as snow;

He was anything but handsome, was the Magpie's 'Ostler
Joe.

But he won the winsome lassie. They'd a cottage and a
cow,

And her matronhood sat lightly on the village beauty's
brow.

Sped the months and came a baby—such a blue-eyed
baby boy!

Joe was working in the stables when they told him of his
joy.

He was rubbing down the horses, and he gave them then
and there

All a special feed of clover, just in honor of the heir.

It had been his great ambition, and he told the horses so,
That the fates might send a baby who might bear the
name of Joe.

Little Joe the child was christened, and, like babies, grew
apace;

He'd his mother's eyes of azure and his father's honest
face;

Swift the happy years went over, years of blue and cloud-
less sky—

Love was lord of that small cottage, and the tempests
passed them by.

Passed them by for years, then swiftly burst in fury o'er
their home;

Down the lane by Annie's cottage chanced a gentleman to
roam;

Thrice he came and saw her sitting by the window with
her child,

And he nodded to the baby, and the baby laughed and
smiled.

So at last it grew to know him—little Joe was nearly four,
He would call the "pretty gempling" as he passed the
open door;

And one day he ran and caught him, and in child's play
pulled him in,

And the baby Joe had prayed for brought about the
mother's sin.

'Twas the same old wretched story that for ages bards
have sung;

'Twas a woman weak and wanton and a villain's tempting
tongue;

'Twas a picture deftly painted for a silly creature's eyes,
Of the Babylonian wonders and the joy that in them lies.

Annie listened and was tempted; she was tempted and
she fell,

As the angels fell from heaven to the blackest depths of
hell;

She was promised wealth and splendor and a life of
guilty sloth;

Yellow gold for child and husband, and the woman left
them both.

Home one eve came Joe, the 'ostler, with a cheery cry of
"Wife!"

Finding that which blurred forever all the story of his
life.

She had left a silly letter—through the cruel scrawl he
spelt;

Then he sought the lonely bedroom, joined his hands
and knelt.

"Now, O Lord, O God, forgive her, for she ain't to
blame," he cried;

"For I owt t' a' seen her trouble and a' gone away and
died;

Why, a wench like her—God bless her—'twasn't likely as
her'd rest

With her bonny head forever on a 'ostler's ragged vest.

"It was kind o' her to bear me all this long and happy
time,

So for my sake please to bless her, though you count her
deed a crime;

If so be I don't pray proper, Lord, forgive me; for you
see,

I can talk all right to 'osses, but I'm nervous like with
thee."

Never a line came to the cottage from the woman who
had flown;

Joe, the baby, died that winter, and the man was left
alone.

Ne'er a bitter word he uttered but in silence kissed the
rod.

Saving what he told his horses, saving what he told his
God.

Far away in mighty London rose the woman into fame,

For her beauty won men's homage, and she prospered in
her shame;
Quick from lord to lord she fitted, higher still each prize
she won,
And her rivals paled beside her as the stars beside the
sun.

Next she made the stage her market, and she dragged
Art's temple down
To the level of a show place for the outcasts of the town,
And the kisses she had given to poor 'Osler Joe for naught
With their gold and costly jewels rich and titled lovers
bought.
Went the years with flying footsteps while the star was
at its height;
Then the darkness came on swiftly and the gloaming
turned to night.
Shattered strength and faded beauty tore the laurels from
her brow;
Of the thousands who had worshipped never one came
near her now.

Broken down in health and fortune, men forgot her very
name,
Till the news that she was dying woke the echoes of her
fame;
And the papers in their gossip mentioned how an "ac-
tress" lay
Sick to death in humble lodgings, growing weaker every
day.

One there was who read the story in a far-off country
place,
And that night the dying woman woke and looked upon
his face.
Once again the strong arms clasped her that had clasped
her long ago
And the weary head lay pillowed on the breast of 'Ostler
Joe.

All the past had he forgotten, all the sorrow and the
shame;

He had found her sick and lonely, and his wife he now
could claim.

Since the grand folks who had known her one and all
had slunk away,

He could clasp his long-lost darling, and no man could
say him nay.

In his arms death found her lying, in his arms her spirit
fled;

And his tears came down in torrents as he knelt beside
her, dead.

Never once his love had faltered through her base, un-
hallowed life;

And the stone above her ashes bears the honored name
of wife.

* * * * *

That's the blossom I fain would pluck to-day from the gar-
den above her dust;

Not the langorous lily of soulless sin or blood-red rose
of lust,

But a sweet, white blossom of holy love that grew in the
one green spot

In the arid desert of Phryne's life where all was parched
and hot.

—Geo. R. Sims.

The above poem, whether a fancy or imaginary sketch, a dream, a vision, or a substantial reality, conveys an important lesson just as the fragrant flower does, which pushes its way through the slush and unhealthy soil of the back yard, and smiles serenely at the divine lesson it conveys to mortals who gaze lovingly upon it, for it has triumphed over obstacles, and brings light, beauty and joy from nature's grand store-house. As to 'Osler Joe he may have been an imaginary being woven into poetry, a factor in a fairy tale, a yarn, as it were, from which to produce a moral or impart a divine lesson; but whatever the facts, the picture is tearfully drawn, and has in some respects a parallel in actual life.

There is an **UNDERWORLD** in every large city, and you may congratulate yourself that you do not live there in reality. It is a receptacle of crushed hopes, aspirations not realized, lives that are wrecked, virtues that

have been darkened or wholly obliterated by selfishness and sin; there is a constant stream of human beings drifting towards that **UNDERWORLD**. The Black Hand assassin is there; the one who lives by murder and theft is there; the one engaged in the white slave trade is there; the Magdalen is there with the smile of an outcast to lure others downward into the depths of hell.

The **UNDERWORLD** is a place of darkness, sin, suffering and despair. Wails of agony, tears of deep anguish and sighs of regrets are often heard there from some repentant soul desiring to escape therefrom, but can not. You approach that **UNDERWORLD** just in proportion as you are selfish, covetous, or sinful, or just in proportion as your thoughts and acts of life are impure or unclean. Thousands are right in this **UNDERWORLD**, the very lowest plane of material and spiritual life. This **UNDERWORLD** is an actual reality, and every one is gradually approaching it, or receding from it. Pure thoughts, unselfishness, generous impulses and kindly feelings towards all humanity cause you to drift further and further from this **UNDERWORLD** of carnal sin and pleasure.

Are you there? If so, God and angels pity you.

Are you approaching it gradually?

That depends on yourself. Your thoughts, your acts in life, and your aspirations determine whether you are actually in the **UNDERWORLD** or not, or gradually approaching it, or receding from it. In this **UNDERWORLD** are the lewd, the licentious, the thief, the despoiler of virtue, the one who is wholly or partially a degenerate, and those who have no respect for the rights of others. In this **UNDERWORLD** are thousands of young girls who have been drawn there by the fascination of sin and the carnal "pleasure" derived therefrom. The music of this **UNDERWORLD** is generally of the "rag time," with vibrations that lead to bestial thoughts and burning passions, causing its denizens to sink deeper and deeper into the filth of vice and sin.

As the daily papers said there had drifted to this **UNDERWORLD** a young girl, Kity Karson, an assumed name to hide her shame. Kitty was singularly beautiful, and under promise of marriage was led astray, and finally under a combination of circumstances had reached this

UNDERWORLD of lust and licentiousness. To the last moment of her sin-stricken life she retained traces of her remarkable beauty, and never lacked for admirers in this **UNDERWORLD** where lives are gradually wrecked and ruined, and sent hellward. She was familiar with the Salvation Army girls who often frequent the lowest hells of vice to sell their magazine, and never in the vilest haunts of sin are they insulted or molested, but are allowed to come and go in peace. Kitty Karson became acquainted with one of them, and they often had heart to heart talks, and they never parted without an affectionate embrace and tear-stained eyes.

Finally this **UNDERWORLD** exhibited itself in all its infernalism—great sores developed on Kitty's face and she finally became blind, and wholly helpless. Notwithstanding her vile life of carnal pleasures, she had carefully hoarded her money, and had ample means to take care of herself at a private hospital, where she was conveyed. Through the Salvation Army she tried to reach her mother, who lived in Detroit, Mich., at the time her wayward girl took leave of her. An investigation revealed the fact that she had passed to spirit life—died of a broken heart, while her father could not be found. Blind, helpless, diseased beyond hope of recovery, there came to her mind the thought of the future, and her bleak, desolate life, and she prayed, and prayed for new sight, and new life that she might again mingle with the world—**REDEEMED!** and lead a happy, useful life; and she prayed and prayed for forgiveness; her prayers were tearful, tender, pathetic, and when heard by the nurses and physician in attendance, the tears of sympathy and love would start in their eyes, and they would try to solace her with kindly, sympathetic words and care. In her delirium she prayed that her mother might come to her, and stopping suddenly in one of her delirious prayers and tender supplications, she said: "**The morning light has come. I see my mother,**" and then she sank back on her pillow, and passed to spirit life.

Thus ended the career of one who had lived in the **UNDERWORLD**, but in her worst and most darkened conditions had hopes that sometimes she could lead a different life, and they clung to her until her dying moments, when her prayers brought her mother to her side,

to receive her in the realms of souls, where, through the agency of ministering spirits, she will be able to soon leave her darkened condition behind her.

Ever bear in mind that this **UNDERWORLD IS A REALITY**, and that while many are drifting above it and from it, by virtue of noble lives, others are drifting towards it, descending deeper and deeper into its cavernous depths, until all hope is lost, and they die with a curse on their lips only to awaken in an **UNDERWORLD** on the spirit side where there is a dark, dreary waste to greet them, an **UNDERWORLD** of wrecked lives and blasted hopes,

PURITY OF MIND AND HEART.

In his seventy-ninth year, decrepid, half blind, nearly starved, James Meredith was found by a neighbor, kneeling by the side of his dead wife, in an Eastern city, his hand tenderly and affectionately clasping hers. He was uttering a fervent prayer to God to restore her to life and health, that she might add to his lonely life that sweet pathos that comes to one when divinely linked to another in these keen sorrows of life that lacerate the soul and bring bitter pains to the memory.

Mr. Meredith, as the story goes, was old, infirm and illy prepared to grapple with the stern realities of life as presented under a Christian civilization, and when he first clasped the hand of his devoted wife, she was alive, and he interpreted her spasmodic convulsions of the breath and body, in dying, as an effort of nature to throw off the disease and return to health.

Mr. Meredith had not as yet, broken the tyrannical shackles of an orthodox church. However misguided in his religion, yet he was kind hearted, the tendrils of his sympathetic nature seeming to vibrate a sweet song of love, intoned with the breath of angels, and illuminated with their sweet smile of love and sympathy. He prayed and prayed, while he held the withered hand of his dying wife, and at times bending in his supplications to Deity to place his cheek affectionately on her face, which was gradually growing colder and colder, until all life faded away, just as the golden sunset fades away as the sun recedes to illuminate other climes. Though dead, he held her hand, and in piteous tones prayed that she might live, and thus while on his knees in pathetic petitions to his God, his soul became illuminated with a light divine, and seemingly in a trance, he saw two forms—one his wife lying on a pallet of straw, and the other a figure just like hers stood by his side with its paleness

vanished, the wrinkles all gone, the tattered dress no longer visible, the hectic flush on the face being displaced with a roseate hue of divine radiance while a smile illumined with joy unspeakable beamed on her countenance as if her whole nature had been displaced by an angel right from paradise.

Lo! the second figure speaks, and in tones to him ineffably sweet and tender, tells him that she—the real self—is in heaven and an angel by her side tells her that a home awaits her and him, a vine-clad and flower-embordered home—oh! so sweet and lovely, and that the sorrows of earth have turned into a sublime fruitage, far surpassing in beauty and loveliness the loftiest imagination to conceive. Then the old man awoke from what seemed to be an experience so weird, so lovely, enchanting, that for a moment he was bewildered, seemingly dazed, and he did not realize that his beloved wife had been for some time locked in the embrace of death. Finally he awakened to the situation. For a time he stood on the divide as it were, between the two realms, the spiritual and the material. He had seen the border of the spirit realms, and caught a glimpse of his future home in the land of souls. He had seen his wife transfigured into—to him—an Angel of Light and Love. Gradually the enchanting spiritual experience passed away, and he found himself alone with his dead wife, he still holding her cold hand, and at times pressing it to his cheek. Finally he laid her two hands tenderly upon her breast, while the tears flowed down his half-starved cheeks, bearing the sweet incense of love toward his devoted companion.

So it not infrequently occurs that the closing scenes of an earthly life where poverty exists, where hunger pinches, and the cold chills from a stove with no red embers of coal therein, pierce every fiber, are truly beautiful, grandly practical, intrinsically sublime, and really angelic. Kings have died in their palace; queens have passed away on a flower-adorned bed; wealthy nabobs have ceased to breathe while surrounded with a retinue of servants and sympathizing friends, but none of their death-bed scenes equaled that of Mrs. Meredith, so poverty-stricken, half-starved and disconsolate in all re-

spects, except in the sublime devotion of her dear companion in sorrow. In death, money counts no more than a pallet of straw. The wealth of a multi-millionaire cannot secure servants on the spirit side of life to render his death-bed scenes delightfully beautiful. He cannot transfigure himself from a cold, selfish, exacting man through the agency of his wealth, into an angel whose vestments are made in a celestial workshop through pure life and deeds.

After the sad death-scene which the poor old man, Meredith, had witnessed, he became a changed man. All nature was to him delightfully intoned with such a sweet melody that his whole nature seemed transformed. Under the influence of that death-bed scene, the vision, the taking of the remains of his wife by the city authorities to bury as the poor always are buried in that metropolis, he became a changed man. In dreams and visions his spirit wife came to him, caressed him, kissed him, and portrayed to him the great beauty of his future home. Thus it is, that it pays an immense percentage to **BE GOOD** and **DO GOOD**; to live an unselfish life; to bring heaven to earth, by living here as advanced spirits do there; by attracting spirits to aid in all things desirable, by living practically on the same plane as they do.

Meredith in his old age lived at times on the divide between the material and spiritual realm; especially was that true when he prayed his night and morning devotions! It was then that his sensitiveness was so delicate, so attuned that he could hear spirit music, see beautiful scenes in the realms of souls, and during those pentecostal scenes, his spirit wife would be present to inspire him with lofty thoughts and aspirations. When his simple prayers were over the spirit scenes would vanish, the dear wife would disappear, and he would find himself on the material side of life, the same old man, pinched with poverty, yet honest, moral, spiritual, and clean in all his thoughts and aspirations.

Thus it is that often in the humble walks of life the death-bed scenes are often very beautiful, transcending in all respects those of the death of an earthly potentate, or a multi-millionaire who is tinged with selfishness.

THE ANGEL IN YOUR NATURE.

In all the walks of life, there is certainly a practical work for every one to do. The sphere for so doing may be circumscribed, may be exceedingly small, yet the capacity for doing good therein measures most accurately **THE ANGEL** in one's nature. You may be poverty-stricken, your life may be practically sunless, flowerless, joyless, and destitute to a great extent of the physical comforts of life, yet you can possess, for all that, something of the **ANGEL**, and radiate an influence that will enrich the world. Your sphere of action may be exceedingly narrow, yet you well know that the sunlight will creep through a very small hole in the wall, and if it then passes through a glass prism, it will divide into seven different colors—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. So from the exceedingly small radius of one's life, there may arise more even than seven influences that may go forth benignly to bless the world.

The angelic qualities determine your status in the spiritual realms, and nothing else does it so well.

As the ingenious gardener fertilizes the soil in order to impart greater vitality to stalk, bud and flower, so you can spiritually fertilize your whole nature by thoughts that vibrate in perfect harmony with the divine work of the higher spheres, providing, of course, that you supplement the same with heroic acts in the alleviation of the pains and suffering of unfortunate mortals, as far as possible.

To become divinely angelic, you must do as the angels do.

You cannot attain the angelic state, while a cringing slave to selfishness, avarice, covetousness, hatred, and thoughts that bear upon them a satanic impress. Thoughts darkened with extreme selfishness place obstacles in your pathway and retard your progress.

There are those who aspire to be angels, but who never do an angelic act, and have no angelic qualities in their natures. In fact, the hideous monster of iniquity whose acts are covered with the slime of selfishness often desires to be an angel. He wants the prize without struggling for it. Such a person in his aspirations is a counterfeit, a vile pretender—the world at large is full of such persons.

One of our old workers, P. B. Randolph, an author and lecturer of note, now in spirit life, was somewhat erratic, yet chockfull of the milk of human kindness. One night as he was walking along the streets of New York many years ago he was taken deathly sick, and sat down on the edge of the sidewalk and commenced to vomit. Finely dressed ladies and gentlemen passed him, looking out of the corner of their eyes; finally he was accosted by a young woman, neatly dressed, who provided him with a room, and nursed him back to health again; and yet she was a Magdalen, an outcast, a woman of the town—yet, strange to say, with a soul full of divine sympathy for those who were suffering, and under the genial influence of Randolph she afterwards reformed, and cultivated the angel in her nature.

There was something sublimely heroic in the conduct of James Ashley, a gambler, as he dashed into a burning block and rescued a little girl and her mother from the flames; he returned to rescue another, but was smothered by the smoke and flame, and passed to the realm of souls under the genial influence of his humane deed. He had something of the angel in his make up, and will advance rapidly in the spirit realms.

There was Jane Eyer—not wholly good, nor wholly bad. She occupied a midway station between “heaven” and “hell.” She had a beautiful foretaste of heaven in her dreams, and was baptized in the fragrance of its trees, which formed clouds of incense, brilliant, as it seemed to her, with the genial smile of angels, and their words to her in dreamland seemed to exhale sweetness, so mild, so gentle, so sympathetic and encouraging, the flowers seemed to pulsate under the influence of the music she heard, every vibration of which, floating off in the spiritual atmosphere, left its divine impress on every

plant, flower, or tree, rendering them more beautiful to her sight. Not wholly good, nor wholly bad, yet she possessed enough of the angel in her nature to be brought in close touch with her spirit mother only, who was trying to get her off of her midway station into a purer spiritual atmosphere, where the angel in her nature would receive a new impetus and be properly developed. Jane Eyer was a woman of the town, on a far higher plane than some, for the life she was leading was repugnant to her; but environment, the conduct of friends, and her failure to find employment, kept her on the midway station, while she was constantly seeking for more light.

Many there are on this midway station, anchored to it—anchored there by their thoughts, whose emanations, like that of a miasmatic swamp, is stifling, darkening, debasing, shutting out the light just beyond, a light divinely radiant with the smiles of seers, philosophers, poets, and many others with like aspirations. Jane Eyer stood there, and when about to advance she would find obstacles in her way—alluring friends with base passions would prevent a step forward, and thus she was compelled to live on this midway station, at times illuminating the divine light of her soul, only to be extinguished in a short time by those who sapped her very vitality and life-blood. Finally the end came—and during her last hours on earth her lamentations, tenderly pathetic and tear stained, and to angel ears a sad musical refrain, bearing on its vibrations the vain regrets of a misspent life, brought the angels to her bedside, for while she has besetting sins, there was a grand, beautiful, pathetic angel side to her nature that would remove her feet forever from the midway station of life, where conditions for a time had imprisoned her. Taking the hand of one of her admirers whom she devotedly loved, she whispered, as reported at the time: “My good fellow, it is growing dark; the light of day seems to be receding, and I feel my life is ebbing away. S-h! I hear enchanting music, so divinely sweet, so tender, that I feel as if again nestling in my mother’s arms in a state of lovely innocence. The darkness is receding and I see—my darling mother!” And then this poor woman with so

much of the angel in her nature that her saintly mother could approach her, take her with her, and prepare her for a future life of usefulness in the spirit realms of life, passed on.

Jane Eyer had enough of the angel in her nature to receive the kind and considerate attention of those who stand ready to assist all who are looking for more light, and she soon arose from her dark conditions.

How much of the **ANGEL** have you in your nature? That depends! You must have a goodly quantity, or the darkness will not readily recede for you. The angel in your nature determines your exact status in spirit life, whether little or much of that divine quality in your soul. You cannot receive angelic influences, unless you vibrate to a certain extent in harmony with them.

TO DO GOOD AND BE GOOD, IS ANGELIC.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

The author of this poem is unknown. On account of its spiritual beauty, we place it here. Many a so-called vacant chair is filled by the loved ones that have left us, could our dim eyes but see their angelic forms:

Thee need not close the shutters yet; and, David, if thee will,

I've something I would say to thee, while all the house is still.

Thee knows 'tis easier to talk in this calm, quiet light, Of things that in our busy days we hid away from sight.

And home is wondrous sweet to me, this simple home of ours,

As well I know it is to thee in all these twilight hours.

But since the shadow on it fell, does it appear to thee

They are more sacred than of old, for so it seems to me?

And, David, since beside our board has stood Ruth's vacant chair

I never yet have clasped my hands and bowed my head in prayer

But I have felt the yearning strong to see the vanished face,

And scarce, I fear, with thankfulness have joined the silent grace.

While often, at the evening meal, with all our children round,

I still have pictured to myself a low and silent mound,

Blue with the early violets or white with winter snow,
And felt a tender pity for the form there lying low.

Though morning may have cast a halo round the vacant
chair,
The sunlight only threw for me a silent shadow there,
And, David, I have watched the stars when thee has been
asleep,
For well thee knows I could not bear to have thee see
me weep.

And yet I never have rebelled—thee knows I speak the
truth—

Though some have said I grieve too much for our sweet
daughter Ruth.

But with the strongest yearning, I can always look above
And feel the Father does not chide the changeless human
love.

I cannot put it into words—I know I need not try;
For thee has understood it all—borne with me patiently.
Thy cares and duties, it is true, are heavier than mine,
But of their deeper feelings men make but slight outward
sign.

And, David, thee has sometimes thought it strange that
I should care
To wreath with flowers and evergreens our daughter's
vacant chair.
Yet I so long to keep her gentle memory green and sweet
For all the children, though her name I seldom now re-
peat.

I cannot seem to speak it with a quiet, restful tone,
Though often, in their thoughtless way, they name the
absent one;
And yet this morn I tried to tell them in a gentle way
Ruth would have counted eighteen years had she been
here to-day—

This bright Thanksgiving day; and then, to me all una-
ware,

The children placed beside our board our daughter's vacant chair,
And now thee sees it, twined with flowers, stand in the moonlight clear;
David, I could not draw it back, but left it standing there.

And it was strange but as I bowed my head in silent grace,
I saw our daughter sitting in her old accustomed place.
I did not start nor speak, but only felt a glad surprise
To see how wondrous fair she was in all her angel's guise.

Her face was glad and glorified, as if the joy of heaven
An added charm to that sweet smile we loved below had given.

I know 'twas but a passing fancy filled the vacant chair,
But when I turned a ray of sunshine seemed to linger there.

But, David, in my heart I've kept that vision all day long,
While it has seemed to lift me up and make my faith more strong.
For I have felt through all, in some mysterious way,
Ruth's silent presence may have filled her vacant chair to-day.

And though I thought this early morn I nevermore could know

A truly thankful heart for all my blessings here below,
Since in our home the vacant chair stood ever in my sight,

Yet, David, that was wrong, I know—I see it all to-night.

And I shall try to picture Ruth amid the angels now;
Not lying in that silent mound, beneath the rain and snow,

As I perhaps too oft have done on winter nights of storm,
When all the others gathered round the fire so flushed and warm.

And well I know one thought alone should make me reconciled,

That I may always call my own this sweet, pure angel
child,
And, David, if thee will, I yet would twine the vacant
chair,
To keep the vision that I saw to-day still sweet and fair.

The world is full of inequalities—contrasts; some of them beautifully charming, lovely beyond the expression of mortal tongue, and scintillating with pearls that seemingly were evolved from the approving smiles of some angelic creature that had constant access to the "Holy of Holies," and who emerged therefrom each day laden with the choice jewels of Love, Charity and Kindly Feelings, to impart to those who had risen to an eminence where they could appreciate them, and realize their intrinsic worth. All things belong to inequalities—all things, the diabolically ugly, and the supremely beautiful as expressed in the higher realms of spirit life are of a constituent part thereof. There is the high mountain, rock-ribbed, towering in the grandeur of its desolation, while below is the fertile valley, evolving from its angelic qualities the genial, incomparable smile of nature, as manifested in the rainbow tints of the flower, so many jewels on her bosom, and the exquisite taste of the fruit on the trees, apparently the outgrowth of the deep, tender, sympathetic emotions of the underground world of the material side of life! Inequalities everywhere. They ascend to the highest heaven; they descend to the lowest hell; they extend throughout all the realms of the universe, from the idiot to the gods of the highest sphere (if any highest) in the universe. You cannot EVEN things in the regions of space. Inequalities are there, and will continue. You cannot make an angel at once out of crude material, any more than you can instantly make a flower spring forth fairy-like out of a seed wherein it is sweetly sleeping, silently aspiring to gladden mortals with the tints of the morning sunbeams as they come through wisps of clouds in the east to cheer the mortals of earth. The lowest vibrations on the material side of life are just as important in the working processes of nature as the very highest.

One class of vibrations produce sound, another heat,

another electricity, another clairaudience, another clairvoyance, another the highest form of inspiration, another light, different kinds extending through the various colors—orange, red, indigo, blue, violet, ultra-violet, and even extending possibly into colors the eye cannot discern.

An elderly, unpretentious woman, had been an omnivorous reader of books pertaining to Spiritualism, Theosophy and occult subjects. With a marvelous memory, she could probably repeat verbatim larger portions of these masterly productions than the authors themselves, and seemed to be delighted therewith. She thought along substantial lines, and naturally angelic in her nature, she reasoned that if all her thoughts and aspirations were absolutely pure, her whole life as clean as innocence itself, that just as soon as she could place herself in perfect harmony with all the cardinal virtues as developed by the higher denizens of spirit life, she would then naturally come within the plane of those vibrations that result in clairvoyance and clairaudience and at the same time not be a medium. That was the reasoning of Mrs. X., as set forth lucidly by one who was intimately acquainted with her. As brutality blunts the finer sensibilities, lowers the spiritual vibrations, hardens the feelings, and renders one more and more like an animal, even possibly to the extent of utter extinguishment of all that is spiritual, making really a brute of a person, with no higher aspirations than the most vicious animal, Mrs. X. reasoned that by scrupulous and systematically following the opposite course, one could rise to the exalted plane of spirituality where only the angels reside, and being in their vibrations, in harmony therewith, she could naturally, without being a medium, hear spirit voices, see spirit scenes, and hold converse with those who were on her plane-vibration. By degrees she banished selfishness, avarice, unkindly feelings, and ostentatious display. Her voice became musically sweet; her smile a benediction; her laughter a rippling melody of benign cheerfulness and goodly feelings; and her charitable acts were as unostentatious as the morning sunbeam which comes to earth on a summer day to kiss the flowers while the dewdrop nestles.

Mrs. X. had lost a lovely daughter—a part of her

very life—one perennial pleasure to her, and for several years she had placed a vacant chair at the table, believing that some day she would see, sitting therein, that precious child! As the narrative sets forth, Mrs. X.'s nature became refined, her spiritual vibrations increased in number, until she could by a mere effort of the will see spirits, hear their words of wisdom, and see the soul-enchanting scenes of spirit life, and the most important fact of all, the hitherto vacant chair to her was occupied at times by her beloved daughter; she could see her, hear her, and feel her as in mortal life, and her very existence became a sweet poem, a profound philosophy, a center of soul-elevating activities, a focus of vibrations that opened wide the doors of spirit life, and why? Because she combined within herself all the constructive principles of nature,—charity, unselfishness, benevolence, kindness, zeal in doing right, with an ever awakened consciousness to **DO GOOD** and **BE GOOD**, in all the walks of life. Personally, we have no absolute knowledge this narrative is true, but we do know there is one—a man—whose life in nearly all respects parallels that of Mrs. X., and hence we are inclined to believe as probable and possible the narrative in relation to this remarkable lady, who now sees that the “vacant” chair is filled, that its occupant speaks and illuminates the mother's heart with joy unspeakable, with pleasures emanating from angelic sources, with an influence that radiates only harmony and happiness.

Whatever your position in life, you can not advance spiritually only along the lines of all the cardinal virtues, which are all embraced within four important words, **BEING GOOD** and **DOING GOOD**, which has in many cases led to a spiritual growth enabling a person, while standing on the Divide between the two worlds, to hold converse with the angels on the one side and mortals on the other.

"THE END OF THE PRIMROSE PATH."

"The primrose path" ends like many a primrose itself, or other flower, whether gaudy or delicate-hued. Its end is inevitable. It is almost always the same—or nearly so. One of the Chicago dailies, some time ago, had an article on this subject, which pertained to a case of world-wide renown—or infamy rather—and in its way one of the "celebrated cases" of history, either ancient or modern. The people described composed a trinity of vice and crime hardly paralleled; but "the primrose path" was theirs, and it ended at last, leaving the stalks where once blossomed the flowers of illicit love and accompanying vices bare and blackened in the hour of desolation and death. One of the actors in the melodrama lies in an unhonored grave, and under circumstances which make even his own family reluctant to have his name mentioned; another one got himself sent to an insane asylum to save his life, and the third supplements the story of her tale of temptation and lapse from virtue by living on charity or maybe by less honorable means. As the paper referred to above says, the moral of the tale is the old, old story—as old as humanity itself—and yet one that never grows old, since in every generation there are those who will not learn it—until too late.

Here was a man of uncommon talent—even genius—in his chosen profession. His works of skill and beauty praised him to all the world. But he was not content with a fair-won fame. He sought depravity and plunged into it, even to worse than bestial crime. And he sleeps in a dishonored grave.

Here was a younger man, with every advantage and opportunity to live a decent, upright life. But in the name of pleasure he sought for the unclean and wallowed in it. And he dwells among madmen, perhaps never to leave their society.

Here was a woman endowed with great beauty, and though unfortunately situated, not without intelligence

to know right from wrong. That she might live luxuriously she let herself be led into depravity and called it pleasure. And she is a physical and moral wreck at twenty-two!

The lesson of it all is plain and clear before us every day. But it needs ever to be reiterated and enforced upon the minds of the young, and to be taken to heart by young and old alike.

It is better to be decent, no matter how pleasant it may seem to tamper with indecency. The primrose path leads down to hell, and the wages of sin is death.

This conveys an important, impressive lesson of to-day. The people connected with the melodrama lived exclusively for self, like the very lowest order of creation. In connection with the above, read carefully the following touching article on "Clean Lips and a Clean Mind," by Dr. Madison C. Peters:

"Clean lips and a clean mind are the badges of noblest manhood. Go among some men of an apparently decent type and you will be sickened by the coarse slang and jests and contemptible jokes which meet with no manly protest.

"Tell me what your most cherished feelings are and I will tell you what you will be. Cleanliness of a man's clothes ought to put him in mind of keeping all clean within. Epicurus said: 'The man who is not virtuous can never be happy.' The pleasure of iniquity in any form is confined to the moment of indulgence in it.

"You have to manufacture it anew on every occasion, and you can only recall the enjoyment by repeating the folly, and with repetition the same discovery of the fleeting nature of the joy is made. It is not a fountain sending ever forth its sparkling waters; but a leaky pitcher, which is empty before we can drink even that which it first contained.

"Robert Burns, whose thoughtless follies laid him low and stained his name, gives his experience in lines which are not more exquisitely beautiful than they are strictly true:

" 'Pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snowfall in the river,
A moment white, then melts forever.'

"The world's pleasures, alluring and seductive, may glow like the rosy rind of the Dead Sea fruit; may glitter like the fresh scales of the sloughed serpent; may fascinate like the siren's maddening song; but nothing ever comes of it except misery and disappointment.

"That a young man must sow his wild oats is a devil's maxim. The only thing to do with wild oats is to put them carefully in the hottest part of the fire and burn them to dust. Sow them, and up they will come with long, tough roots, luxuriant stalks and leaves, and a crop will follow which turns one's heart cold to think of.

"The botanical definition for wild oats is: A species of oats remarkable for the length of time the grain will lie in the soil and retain its vegetative power. Where it abounds naturally it is an inveterate weed. The popular delusion that after a little while those who have sown wild oats will settle down to steady habits and are more likely to make better men for having sown wild oats has ruined thousands.

"There are men who in an unguarded moment have gone into scenes of temptation and have turned away with horror, like a bird that, having strayed into the poisonous atmosphere of chemical works, has rushed back quickly to the pure air of heaven, but such cases are the exception. One night in a place of evil concourse may so pollute the imagination as to break down all the barriers of years. The first step in sin startles a man, then it becomes in turn pleasing, easy, delightful, frequent, habitual, confirmed, importunate, obstinate, damned.

"I have somewhere seen a sculptured representation of Bacchus, the god of drink and revelry. He is riding on a panther at a furious bound. How suggestive and true! A man begins a career of vice and thinks he has mounted a well broken steed, that he has the reins in hands, can keep it in control, and stop it when he pleases. But lo! when he sees the approaching chasm and would fain pull up he finds he is astride a savage brute that no human power can tame.

"How many men would give all they have to begin life all over again! Alas and alack! How many wretches die, scalded and scorched with agony; and were the sum

of all the pain harvested that comes from sowing wild oats it would rend heaven with its outcry and make the cheeks of darkness pale.

"There is nothing you need to cultivate so much as self-control. 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control. These three alone lead life to sovereign power.' Plato says: 'The first and best victory is for a man to conquer himself, and without that he is naught but the veriest slave.' Carlyle says: 'The king is the man who can.'

"The harvest consequent upon impurity may not be immediate. There may be a period of gratification and delight in transgression, long continued, when the eye is not tired of seeing, nor the appetite glutted with indulgence. But sooner or later 'the glare of the enjoyment is shut out by returning clouds of conscious distress, and the day of mirth sinks in the darkness of despair.'

"It is not true that 'the good die young.' 'The wicked do not live out half their days.' Cicero said: 'To live long it is necessary to live slowly.' Franklin: 'If you will not hear reason, she will surely rap your knuckles.' Virgil: 'Cease to think that the decrees of the gods can be changed by prayers.'

"Young man, living in America and the twentieth century, the synonyms for opportunity, will you sell your birthright for a few nights' carousing? Will you in the red gleaming of the wine cup, in the madness of the gambling table, drown all there is about you of purity and nobleness and manliness, and become a poor, degraded, wretched thing?

"Know prudent, cautious self-control is wisdom's root."

The daily newspapers of this country teem with stories of people who in many respects have been contributors to those low vibrations, emotions, passions, tastes and practices, which place them exactly where they are. If your emotions tend toward habits which are unclean, vile and destructive in their tendencies, they lead you into spiritual darkness. Such emotions are a much greater obstruction to the vibrations that emanate from exalted spirits, than the darkest cloud is to the

sun's rays. The one who is on a low plane is constantly creating obstructions to the refining vibrations of those in the higher spheres. Thus all the selfish passions erect a barrier against the light of angelic influences. The angels can only approach you just in proportion as you remove the barriers surrounding you, caused by the exercise of baneful passions, hence the necessity of having clean minds must be apparent to all. The cultivation of vile passions, and the practice of evil, tend to fence one in spiritually, confining him, when death comes, within that fence that he himself has created. In order to advance, you must purify the spiritual atmosphere around you, so that the garments of the angelic messengers that approach you will not be so badly soiled. Every evil thought, every envious feeling, every avaricious impulse, every practice of deception, every burst of anger, and every wrong perpetrated against another, places obstructions in your own pathway. Commence, then, **NOW**, and create no more obstructions to impede your progress, and at the same time try to remove those you have already made, and with your atmosphere thus purified, you are prepared to invite the angels to visit you.

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